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# Quarterly Journal
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## THE DEEPER MEANING OF YAJNA IN INDIAN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT *

BY M. YAMUNACHARYA, M.A.

THE word "Yajña" figures prominently in Vedic and Vedāntic literature. "Yajña" sums up within it the whole story of the evolution of Indian thought regarding the concept of sacrifice. The Vedic ritual of sacrifice is seen to involve the notion of the propitiation of the gods by the sacrifice of animals at the altar. This notion has persisted even to the present times and animal sacrifice is still in vogue amongst certain sections of the Hindus, belonging to the lower castes. But alongside the survival of this aspect of yajña we find refination of the cult of sacrifice where '*piṣṭa pas'u*', a dummy animal made of flour, is sacrificed symbolically at the altar. This attempt is characteristic of the synthetic and conciliatory spirit of Hinduism which has from time to time breathed new meanings into old forms. When the old forms could not stand the strain of the influx of the new meaning they were seen gradually to fall into desuetude. The doctrine of *ahimsa* which received a fresh impetus with the advent of

* Paper submitted to the Thirteenth All-India Oriental Conference, Nagpur.

Buddhism, or of Bhāgavatism which favoured what is termed as the *sâtvîk* mode of worship as against the *rājasic* and *tāmasic*, brought to the fore a notion of yajña which bore a deeper ethical and spiritual significance. This deeper meaning was indicated in the Upaniṣads and found its way into the Bhagavad Gīta. It is this deeper significance of 'yajña' that will receive special notice here.

"Yajña" is derived according to lexicographers from the root '*yaj*'. *Yaj* is defined as '*dēva pūja*' or its equivalent 'worship of the Deity'. The philosophy of yajña thus reduces itself into the philosophy of worship in its best form. It involves undoubtedly the element of sacrifice which does not necessarily imply the offering of blood of an animal but the offering of oneself to the service of the Highest in him, in a spirit of dedication. By this interpretation the crude notion of sacrifice has disappeared to yield place to one which is more germane to the spiritual progress of man. We shall try to trace the elaboration of this idea through the unravelling of the significance of certain concepts which have been woven into the texture of Hindu religion.

The Cchāndogya Upaniṣad strikes the key-note of the interpretation of yajña in terms of righteousness rather than in terms of ritual. The quality of continence is regarded as true yajña in the following passage: what people call sacrifice (*yajña*), that is really abstinence (*brahmacarya*), for he who knows obtains that world of Brahman, (which others obtain by sacrifice) by means of abstinence.

What people call sacrifice (*iṣṭa*), that is really abstinence, for by abstinence, having searched (*iṣṭva*), he obtains the self.

What people call sacrifice (*Sattrāyana*), that is really abstinence, for by abstinence he obtains from the *sat* (the true), the safety (*trāna*) of the self. (8.5. 1-2.)

The Brihadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad indicates the lines on which the rite of animal sacrifice, like for example the *aṣvamedha* (the Horse Sacrifice) could be interpreted symbolically instead of literally or ritualistically. The very initial passage of the Upaniṣad states: "verily the dawn is the head of the horse which is fit for

sacrifice, the sun its eye, the wind its breath, the month the vaisvānara fire, the year the body of the sacrifical horse." This passage indicates the cosmological interpretation of yajña.

When we next turn to the Bhagavad Gīta, we there find the deeper ethical and religious significance of yajña finding and striking an unambiguous expression. The impulse to worship is regarded by modern philosophers of religion as an essential ingredient of the religious attitude. As the religious attitude is also capable of development from the cruder to the more refined state, so also the attitude of worship proceeds from the lower to a higher level. One could easily discern the stages of this development in the Gīta. At the outset the Gīta calls for a radical change in one's attitude regarding yajña which is preliminary to the purification of the soul, for which yajña is just a preparatory rite. It is the attitude that determines the worth of sacrifice and not the punctilious performance of the ritual itself. Three attitudes towards yajña are mentioned which give rise to three kinds of yajñas, one higher than the other. These three kinds of yajña are termed, the *Sātviki*, the *Rājasi* and the *Tāmasi* (Ch. 17. Verses 11 to 13). The sacrifice is *sātviki* when it " is observed according to ordinance and offered by men desiring not the fruit thereof, whose mind is set in concent (harmony) in the knowledge that sacrifice must be done." The sacrifice is *rājasic* " when it is done in ostentation and with a purpose to get fruit therefrom." That sacrifice is of the worst type or *tāmasic* " when it is done without ordinance, without gift of food and void of faith." The texts, pertaining to the three varieties of yajña envisage the performance of yajña, enjoin a change of heart and a spirit of dedication which lifts yajña to a higher religious level. A higher conception than this is reached when one comes to look upon Brahman himself as the sacrifice and all its appurtenances: " Brahman is the deed of sacrifice; Brahma is the oblation by Brahma offered in the fire that is Brahma; and to Brahma shall he go who dwells in concent (harmony) with the works that are Brahman". The teaching regarding sacrifice in this and the following passages in the Gīta has been summarised by Lionel Barnet in the following words: " Highest is the sacrifice of knowledge, where the soul in the enlightenment of perfect wisdom

surrenders itself to the supreme wisdom and love. Knowledge is the surest way to salvation; and it arises from observing the yoga with loving faith."

This seems to be the deeper meaning of yajña which leads to a philosophy of life which reaches its fruition in the mingling of love and knowledge or rather knowledge itself ripening into love (*bhakti-rupāpanna-jñāna*). This conception is very much akin to Spinoza's *Amor Intellectualis Dei*. The implications of this conception for religion and ethics may now be unfolded.

According to Manu the daily round and common tasks of life are constituted of a series of sacrifices which may be classified into five groups (*the panca-maha-yajñās*) *

'Study and teaching constitute the *Brahma*-sacrifice;

Propitiatory rites constitute the *pitr*-sacrifice;

Sacrificial ceremonies to the gods constitute the *Daiva*-sacrifice;

Offerings to all creatures constitute the *Bhauta*-sacrifice;

The fifth is the loving treatment of human guests—the *Nṛi*-sacrifice.

The Bhagavad Gita refers to sacrifices by charity or parting with one's goods for the benefit of others; to contemplation as another sacrifice, to devotion a third; to study and acquisition of knowledge as the fourth. The appraisement of the relative value of the forms of sacrifice is suggested in the following line. "There is more bliss in sacrifice of knowledge than in sacrifice of substance."

For man, his whole life and its activities are to be considered as a sacrifice—an offering to the Being whose very quintessential nature is sacrifice. The ceremonial sacrifices—of each class of people according to its mode and manners—are but symbolical of the life sacrifice. This is thus described in the Taittirīyopaniṣad: To the wise man, enlightened of God, sacrifice is self-surrender. The oblation in the sacrifice is the soul itself—the master of the ceremony. The mistress or the wife of the sacrificer is his firm

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* *Adhyāpanam brahma-yajñaḥ pitr-yajñastu tarpaṇam*
*Homo daivo balir bhauto nṛi-yajñotithi-pūjanam.*

faith (*Sraddhā*); the fuel or the faggots for the sacrifice is the body. The *vedi* (or altar in the sacrificial ground) is one's own very breast (or the seat of the heart). The sacrificial grass (*darbha*) is the hair covering the body. The four Vedas are no other than the tapering, uprising flames (of the fire placed in the fire-place). The post intended for tethering of the victims of sacrifice is the inner heart, the clarified butter that is poured into the fire is desire itself. The victim offered (or immolated) is one's anger itself. The daily fire-sacrifice (*agni hotra*) is austerities or the regulated daily moral and religious observances. The fee is the peace of mind to which continence and other rules of conduct contribute. The *Hota* is speech, the *Udgāta* is breath; the *Adhvanyu* is the eye; the *Brahma* is the mind; the *Fires* (several denominational ones of the sacrifice) are the ears. The vow is the vow taken to consecrate the life-time of the man for the purpose for which he stands in the scheme of creation, self-realisation. The *Soma pāna* is what you eat and drink daily for your sustenance. The *Upasāda* is your enjoyment. The *Pravargya* is your walkings, standings and sittings. The *Āhavanīya* fire is your face. Pour into this the oblation of your knowledge. The *Samidh* is the morning and evening meals. The *Samānas* are the three periods morn, noon and eve. The *Darṣa-pūrṇa māsa* sacrifices are days and nights. The final ceremony of sacred bath (*Avabhritha*) is death. You have completed and consecrated thus your life-sacrifice (yajña).

The inner meaning of yajña reaches its further depth in a religion of self-surrender which sets at naught all rites and writ duties ("the filthy rags of righteousness") and rises serene to a vision which in the words of Professor A. N. Whitehead "claims nothing but worship; and worship is a surrender to the claim of assimilation, urged with the motive force of mutual love." (Science and the Modern World, P. 238.) This is the principle that underlies the doctrine of *prapatti* of the Rāmānuja School of Vedāntic theism. Sacrifice, for this view-point, is no other than self-surrender (*Nyāsa-tyāga-s'araṇāgati-prapatti*) or capitulating one's self and all for the fulfilment of the great purpose, the service of God and the service of man, (*Bhagavad kainkarya*

and *Bhāgavata kainkarya*). The sum and substance of this teaching is expressed in the Gita verse in the eighteenth chapter,—

> *Sarvadharmānparityajya māmēkam s'araṇam vraja*
> *Aham tvā sarvapāpēbhyo mokṣaiṣyāmi mā suchaḥ.*
>
> (Bh. Gita XVIII—66)

The purport of which may be stated thus: "Abandon all rites and writ duties. Cast thyself at My feet, resign thyself to My will, approach Me in all thy nakedness, be sacrificed and out of the very sacrifice you shall be raised and restored to Eternal life, peace and bliss". This is what God would seem to call upon every man to do. One's own will is to be resigned to the Divine Will. All separate life-careers are to be incorporated in the purposes of the universe careering to its god-appointed goal. Life lived in the light of this vision renders all life's functions modes of worship. Man in this scheme becomes an inheritor of a glorious heritage to which he adds his own humble mite. This is not a life of passivity but one of dynamic activity where he, like his own God, is incessantly at work for the good of the world, animated all the time by a high hope of adventure. "That religion is strong" says Professor Whitehead "which in its ritual and its modes of thought evokes an apprehension of the commanding vision. The worship of God is not a rule of safety—it is an adventure of the spirit, a flight after the unattainable. The death of religion comes with the repression of the high hope of adventure".

# IDENTIFICATION OF PALMADI

By Dr G. S. Gai.

The place-name *Palmāḍi*, with a long vowel in the second syllable occurs in the Chikmagaḷūr[1] inscription of the Western Gaṅga King Rāchamalla III, published by Dr. Fleet in *Epigraphia Indica* Vol. VIII. Pp. 50-9.[2] The date of the record is placed between A.D. 991 and A.D. 1004. About the identification of this place, Fleet said that he could not find its representative in the maps.[3] The earliest mention of this place-name, as far as I know, is to be found in an inscription[4] of Kadamba Kakustha, assigned to about A.D. 450, which states that *Palmaḍi* and *Mūḷivaḷḷi* were granted to one Vija-Arasa, in recognition of his heroism in a fight. Palmaḍi of this inscription is evidently the modern Halmiḍi where the record was found and modern Halmiḍi[5] is a little village "about seven miles north-north-west of Belur, close to the boundary line of the Belur and Chikmagalur Taluks"[6] in the Mysore State. The Beṇṇūr copper-plate grant[7] of the Kadamba king Kṛṣṇavarman (II), who is to be placed in the second quarter of the sixth century A.D. records the gift of *rāja-bhāga-daśabandha*[8] and a

1. This is the headquarters town of the Kadur, present Chikmagalur District and of the taluk of that name, in Mysore State.
2. The inscription is also published in the *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. VI, Cm. 3. This Rāchamalla is shown as Nitimārga, III. Rachamalla in the genealogical table, under No. 23, on P. 50 of *Mysore and Coorg from Inscriptions* by Rice. As the photograph supplied to Fleet from which he edited the inscription was not quite distinct, the form *Palmaḍi* instead of *Palmāḍi* is also possible.
3. Ep. Ind. Vol. VIII, P. 51.
4. M. A. R. 1936, P. 73.
5. Here initial *p-* is changed to *h-* (a regular feature in the Kannaḍa language) and *-a-* becomes *-i-* in the second syllable, possibly due to the influence of *-i-* in the following syllable.
6. M. A. R. 1936, P. 80. Mūḷivaḷḷi is represented by a village of the same name, 3 miles to the east of Halmiḍi.
7. Ep. Car. Vol. V. Bl. 245. Beṇṇūr is in the Belur hobli of the Hassan District where the inscription of Kakustha was found.
8. For an explanation of this term, see Ep. Car. Vol. V, Intdn. P. iii note. 5; and *Successors of the Sātavāhanas*, Pp. 295-96.

piece of land measuring six *nivartanas* in the village called *Palmaḍi* included in the Sēndraka *viṣaya*. This Palmaḍi also has to be identified with the present Halmaḍi referred to above. We get the additional information that, in the time of Kṛṣṇavarman II, Palmaḍi was situated in the Sēndraka *viṣaya*, which appears to have included the northern extremity of the Hassan District. Another stone inscription at Uppahaḷḷi[9] in the Chikmagaḷūr Taluk, dated S'aka 882 (A.D. 959), mentions *Palmāḍi* along with *Kiriya-Muguḷi* which are obviously the present Halmiḍi and Chikmagaḷūr respectively. In view of all this, the Palmāḍi of the Chikmagaḷūr record adverted to at the beginning has to be identified with modern Halmiḍi only. Thus Palmaḍi of the inscription of Kākustha,—Palmaḍi in the Sēndraka-*viṣaya* mentioned in the Beṇṇūr plates, Palmāḍi of the two Chikmagaḷūr stone records—represent one and the same place, which is modern Halmiḍi in the Belur Taluk, Hassan District, of the Mysore State.

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9- Ep. Car. Vol. VI, Cm. 42.

# THE INTERPENETRATION OF THE ĀRYAN AND THE ABORIGINAL CULTURES IN INDIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE SORAS (SAVARAS)

By Dr. G. V. Sitapati, B.A., L.T., D.Litt.

(Continued from Vol. XXXIX. No. 1. Page 39)

## Medicine, Magic and Prayer

Medicine, Magic and Prayer are, as Rivers observes, the three ways in which all nations of the world have attempted to avert an evil or cure a disease. All the three methods are still in vogue though they vary in proportion to the advanced learning, culture and civilization of the people. The method of prayer included, in the case of Āryans, sacrifices and prayers which were openly chanted; but in the case of Soras, it meant only oblations with an implied prayer or hope that if the deities are satisfied with the oblations offered, the evil is averted or the disease is cured. Medicine was practised by the Āryans of the Ṛgvedic times as was evidenced by the work of the Asvini Devatas, but the science of medicine—*Āyurveda*—was of later origin and development. There existed magical cure in the Ṛgvedic times also; it developed in course of time and was used extensively in the age of the Atharva Veda. The primitive people have been always credited with an admirable knowledge of medical drugs and with the power of effecting a cure by their charms and talismans. *S'abar mantrams* have been referred to as very efficacious in all parts of India inhabited by the Soras. With great difficulty I learnt from an old Sora priest two mantras on condition that I should not disclose them to any one. One is to avert an evil produced by sorcery and another to remove the pain caused by the scorpion sting. I was surprised to find two charms in the Atharva Veda which are exactly similar to the charms I learnt from the Sora priest. I am now disposed to think that many more mantras of the Atharva Veda are based upon S'abar mantras. I have prepared a list of about two hundred drugs used by the Soras with the Sora as well as the vernacular and botanical names and noted how they are used; and also the names of the ailments known to the Soras and the recipes in each

case. But the Sora physicians do not entirely depend upon the medicinal efficacy; they have recourse to magical charms and oblations to the evil spirits that produce the evil or disease. I know of many among the Āryanised Hindus of the plains who have implored the Sora medicinemen to avert an evil or effect a cure by their drugs and charms. There is also a belief that there are among the Soras, experts who by some kind of divination can select a place for a satisfactory well to be dug.

Séances are of every day occurrence in the Sora country. I attended one of them. It was marvellous. The spirit of a man who had passed away a few days previously had to be consulted by his widow and sons. They came to the village, Serang, in which I happened to be present. The person that acted as the medium was an old woman who, I was told, had no knowledge of the person that died. She invoked the spirit of the deceased and the spirit that possessed her responded to the inquiries made by the widow and sons. It was the mouth of the medium that spoke but there was a marked change of voice and the widow at once recognised it to be the voice of her husband and cried out with renewed grief. The spirit with the genial temper and humorous vein which, it seems, the man possessed while alive, said "why do you cry? Some evil spirits bewitched me. Will you remain on earth for ever? You will also come to me one day or other, and we shall be together again. Tell me what you want." The woman wanted to know where he concealed the money, to whom he owed anything and from whom he had to realise anything and such other domestic matters, because the man died rather suddenly without having time enough to speak about them. I learnt subsequently that whatever he (or rather his spirit) spoke through the medium was and came to be true to the very letter. The concealed money was found and receipts and payments could easily be effected according to the information disclosed.

## Astrology

The Soras are also believed to be experts in fixing *muhurtams*—auspicious timings—for undertaking any work or performing marriage or other sacred rites. They consult the position of the stars to fix such *muhurtams*. They have a knowledge of the

constellations and an old priest has given me a list of thirty names. The Soras do not distinguish between planets and stars. They consider the Sun to be the mother and the Moon, the father, and the stars to be their children. An ætiological myth accounting for the non-appearance of the stars during day, says, that the Sun was very hungry soon after delivery and began to devour her children—the stars—just as the cobra is supposed to do, and the Moon, the father, rushed in after the Sun had devoured half of them and rescued the remaining half. The Sora word for a star in general is *tuitujan* and the names of the particular stars are compound words containing *tujan*, the contracted form of *tuitujan*. Some names can be equated with the names given by the Āryans. *Iñsātujan* means plough star (Sanskrit *iṣā* : Oriya. *hūsā*, the shaft of a plough). This is identical with the Āryan, *ārdrā* or Orion group. *Kukkur-tujan* or *rukkutujan* (meaning cluster-star) refers to *kṛittika* or the pleiades; *kukkuran-an-a-arred-tujan* (meaning group of parrots) refers to *rohiṇi* or hyades. *Orubtujan* means the evening star and *Dagaldatujan*, the morning star. Jupiter is called *risaltujan* (meaning *ṛṣi* star), it is also known as *bāmadatujan* (meaning brahman star). Venus is known as *Sunkaratujan*, apparently the Āryan name *S'ukra*. Saturn is called *Sālāntujan*, meaning leisurely-star. There is probably a humorous reference to the irregular movement or aberration of the planet. *Sanditujan* (cot-star) refers to the first four of the Āryan *saptarṣis* or seven sages or the Charles's wain.

## Music

The Soras and other primitive peoples of India have an eye for whatever is beautiful in nature. Their mythology, folk-lore, songs poetical fancies, conventions, riddles and proverbs are based on the physical features of the picturesque land in which they live, on the animals, birds and trees which they come across in their daily pursuits and on the surroundings and environment. Primitive peoples like the Soras are naturally endowed with the art of composing and singing songs and have several musical instruments—wind, stringed and percussive. Among the stringed instruments of the Soras there is only one

which is provided with frets like the *Vīna*. It is called *memerajan*; *meme* means breasts and *rajan* is the contracted form of *ranajan* meaning stringed musical instrument. It is so-called because the two globular gourds supporting the body of the instrument resemble the two breasts of women. The instrument consists of a piece of bamboo about one foot and a half long which is fixed upon the two gourds and has on it four frets towards the head. They are two strings, one of which passes over the frets and is vibrated to produce the notes of the melodies. The other string called the *drone* passes by the side of the frets without touching them or the bamboo piece and is slightly on a lower level than the former string. It resembles the *kinneri* used by the aboriginal tribes of Central and Northern India. Fifteen years ago when on my way to London I met my friend Prof. Jules Bloch in Paris, I gave him this *memerajan* and had already sent him another musical instrument called *sarakadrajan*—an instrument made of reeds to be used as an instrument of percussion These two I regarded to be peculiar to the Soras. But my friend drew my attention to the musical instruments which he had obtained from Medagascar for the Trocodero museum. Amongst them were two which closely resembled the two I had given him. There was absolutely no difference in shape or structure; the only difference I noticed was in the size and the material used in tying up the parts. From the descriptive notes ttached to them, I learnt that the primitive people of Medagascar had been using these instruments from time immemorial. I then discovered evidence sufficient to establish the antiquity of these instruments. I wonder if the Āryan use of a stringed instrument was so early as this and I venture to suggest that in all probability the polished Āryan *Vīna* developed out of this crude primitive stringed instrument. It is from this *memerajan* that I could determine the values of the notes used in the Sora songs and Sora music. The two strings of the instrument stand in the relation of 15 to 16 as determined by the number of vibrations which each produces when vibrated without the use of frets; that is, if the note produced by the *drone* is taken to be C or *sadja* the fundamental note of the Indian musical scale, the not

produced by the string passing over the frets is B or *kais'iki* or lower *nishadha*. When the first fret is pressed the string passing over it produces C the note of the *drone*: the succeeding three notes are D, E and F.

The following table presents the points of comparison mentioned above. I arrange the notes with reference to the vibrations indicated by them:

| Serial No. | Corresponding South Indian Name | Symbols of the Western scale. | Number of Vibrations |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | *Kais'iki Nishadha* | B | 225 |
| 2 | *Shadja* | C | 240 |
| 3 | *Chatuhsṛti Rishabha* | D | 270 |
| 4 | *Sādhāraṇa Gāndhāra* | E | 300 |
| 5 | *Śuddha Madhyama* | F | 320 |

The first three notes are invariable heard in every Sora song and 90 per cent of the Sora songs are based on them only. The fourth note is heard in a few songs, and the fifth is very rarely heard. There is no positive or definite evidence to determine the early musical scale of the Āryan songs, the Vedic hymns, but if we take it for granted that the present day method of chanting them represents the earliest Āryan method of the Vedic times, I am prepared to say that the first three notes mentioned above are the very notes used in chanting the Vedic hymns also, and they were known as *anudatta*, *udatta* and *svarita* latter on a fourth note was added and the four notes were known as *prathama*, *dvitīya tritīya* and *chaturtha* as mentioned in *Ṛkprātis'ākhya*.

The names *S'hadja*, *Rishabhā*, *Gāndhāra*, *Madhyama*, *Panchama*, *Daivata* and *Nis'ādha* came into use after the octave was completed and the Indian music was reduced to scientific system. The fundamental note was then taken to be *Shadja, C.* It is said that *Gāndhāra* is so-called because, it was the starting of the *Gāndhāra* scale, but in the case of *Nishadha*, the lexicographers say that it is so-called because the other notes dwell there (*Nishidanti atra saptasvarāḥ*). This derivation appears to be very fanciful. I am disposed to think that the note *nishadha* was

called by that name because it was found, as at present, to be the starting note of the music of the *Nishadhas* among whom were included (*Vindhya nilayaḥ S'abaraḥ,*) the Soras inhabiting the Vindhya region.

Thus in all cultural aspects we find the Soras and other primitive people of India developing along with the Āryans until the latter out-numbered and over-powered and finally drove them to the hills and forests and consequently to an isolated and secluded life which not only arrested their further development but reduced their culture and civilisation to a lapsed condition.

(*Concluded.*)

# THE THIRD INVASION OF THE PESHWA MADHAVRAO I AGAINST MYSORE 1769-1770

By Gondker Narayana Rao, M.A.

This paper, as also the previous one, on the Second Invasion of the Peshwa Mādhavrao against Mysore, 1767, published in these pages (Vol. XXXVII. Pages 171-189) is written mainly on the basis of abundant material obtained from Marāṭhi and other sources which were not available during the time of Wilks, whose *History of Mysoor* written more than a century ago, naturally suffers from certain defects and serious omissions.

## Introductory

The latter half of the Eighteenth Century witnessed a very rapid extension of British power, simultaneously with the sudden collapse of powerful native kingdoms in the north and south of India. In the south, both the Marāṭha empire and Mysore yielded to the English at short intervals by the close of that century. An important reason which led the downfall of these Indian powers was the disunity that prevailed and the continuous warfare that was carried on among themselves thus exhausting each other and providing opportunities to the English. The Indian statesmen exhibited in this period an awful lack of political vision and diplomacy. Had it not been for the incessant invasions of the Marāṭhas against Haidar, the latter would have made a better stand and would probably have even succeeded in driving out the English from at least the South. But as it happened, throughout the latter half the Eighteenth Century, there was a series of frequent Marāṭha invasions against Mysore. Haidar, during the twenty-one years of his rule in Mysore, was almost always engaged in wars either against the Marāṭhas or the English. He, however, showed better understanding of the political issues and was more tactful in his dealings, than the Marāṭhas. He had to make a permanent alliance either with the Marāṭhas or with the English. If his desire had been to keep India for Indians and to prevent the English from

getting a permanent foothold in the country, he should then have made a lasting alliance with the Marāṭhas. But the standing claim of the Marāṭhas for the *chauth* over Mysore made it impossible for him to have them as his allies. He, therefore, sought friendship with the English. But even there he was disappointed because of the failure of the latter to aid him in 1770, when the Marāṭhas invaded Mysore. Thus, by force of circumstances, he had to carry on a struggle on two fronts—against the Marāṭhas on the one side and the English on the other—which was naturally most exhausting. Particularly, when he was engaged against the Marāṭhas, the peculiar nature of their warfare, of ravaging and plundering the territory, very much crippled the resources of his state. However, his extraordinary capacity and the rich resources of the state sustained him well up to the very end of his life. His son Tippu inherited the energy of his father but not he tact. He too carried on for a good while and ultimately succumbed to the inevitable destiny. And for this ultimate downfall of Haidar and Tippu, who were the two great enemies of the English, the Marāṭhas were in no small measure responsible.

Thus the Mysore-Marāṭha relations in the latter half of the Eighteenth Century, will show, to what extent they were responsible for the fall of Haidar and Tippu and the consequent extension of British power in the South in particular and in India in general.

## General Causes of Mysore-Maratha Wars

These invasions of the Marāṭhas against Mysore, which invariably yielded good results, were nominally based upon their claim to possess the right to levy *chauth* in the six subahs of the Deccan and their dependencies, in accordance with the authority they professed to derive from the *firmān* of the Mughal Emperor obtained in 1719. This *firmān* recognized also the Marāṭha conquest of certain territories on either side of the river Thungabhadra in Karnātak, which, later became the bone of contention between the Marāṭhas and Haidar. The Marāṭha claim for *chauth* over different areas in the Deccan was, however, never permanently recognized by the South Indian powers. The original Mughal authority itself was more nominal than real in most of

these areas, with the result that the Marāṭhas had to lead *mulkgiri* expeditions almost every year in order to enforce their claim. Mysore was considered to be a dependency of Bijāpur which was one of the six subhas and the Marāṭhas claimed *chauth* from Mysore too. It is this claim of the Marāṭhas and the later disputes regarding the dependency of the territories on the two sides of the river Thungabhadra, which started a series of Marāṭha invasions against Mysore.

## Causes of the Third War

The Third War between Peshwa Mādhavrao I and Haidar, which was one of the most serious wars fought by the former as well as the latter, commenced in 1769 and lasted for two and a half years upto 1772. The Peshwa himself directed the campaigns during the first six months, after which Trimbakrao Pethe, the Peshwa's uncle took charge. This war was characterised by the unusual camping of the Marāṭha troops for quite a long period in a country distant from their home-land and the determined and persistent fight offered by Haidar in spite of a large portion of his territory being occupied by the enemy throughout the period. Both the powers suffered very heavily in men and money during the fight; and this heavy loss had its own effects on the strength and resources of the Marāṭha nation which was soon to launch a struggle against the English. Haidar's power too was greatly crippled.

The causes of the war were, as usual, the non-payment of the *chauth* by Haidar for the two previous years and the failure on the part of both to observe the treaty made at the end of the previous war in 1767.

## Maratha attack on Gurramkonda fails (May 1769)

The actual hostilities, however, commenced with the attack made by a Marāṭha Sardar against Gurramkonda[1] in the north-east

1. Anil Chandra Banerjee in his article *Peshwa Madhav Rao I's last Carnatic expedition*, published in the Journal of Indian History Vol. XX. Supplement P. 1; and also in his book *Peshwa Madhav Rao I*. P. 185), wrongly assumes that the Peshwa invaded Mysore before April 1769, though actually

of the Mysore State. That place had been given as a *jāgir* by the Marāṭhas in 1767 to Mir Reza, a brother-in-law and general of Haidar. But the next year he had deserted the side of the Marāṭhas and joined Haidar. Therefore, in the month of May 1769 Mahimāji Shinde, the Marāṭha officer at Dodballāpur entered the territory of Gurramkonda with his troops, in order to confiscate the *jāgir.*[2] He easily took possession of the smaller places and garrisoned them. His main army which consisted of about 1,500 men took up a position six miles from Rāyachoti. Haidar, who was hitherto at Bangalore, moved east to Muḷbāgal and sent a strong force of 4,000 regular infantry, 6,000 irregular infantry and a special division of cavalry under Mir Reza, Srinivasarao Bārki and Mānekhan to check the activities of Mahimāji Shinde.[3] These generals made arrangements to prevent the retreat of the Marāṭhas towards Dodballāpur and marched forward towards the place where the Marāṭhas had camped. The enemy was now surrounded and out-numbered. About 500 of their army deserted to Haidar's side. After suffering heavily,

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this invasion took place in 1770. This wrong assumption of his is based on an uncritical study of a letter (Selections from the Peshwa Daftar Vol. XXXVII, No. 170) which is wrongly dated by the editor, has resulted in his wrongly accepting the following events as having happened in 1769 ;

(i) that the Peshwa advanced as far as Devarayadurga within April 1769 ;

(ii) that he decided to leave a strong detachment in Mysore during the rainy season under an experienced general ;

(iii) that neither Gopalrao nor Trimbakrao was willing to stay ; and

(iv) that, therefore, the Peshwa had to return to Poona without making satisfactory arrangements against Haidar in 1769.

None of the above events occurred in 1769. But all of them took place in the next year 1770. It is surprising how Mr. Banerji could have failed to notice this mistake, which has affected his whole account.

2. *V. V. Khare*: Aitihāsika Lekha Sangraha Vol. III. Letter No. 803 (referred to hereafter as *Khare* only).

3. *S. P. D.* (Selections from Peshwa Daftars) Vol. XXXVII. Letter No. 172, also *Haidarnāma* Pp. 78-80 (Mss. in the Mysore Archæological Office).

Sindhe retreated to Cuddapah and then to Anantapur with only about 50 horsemen.

### HAIDAR'S AGGRESSION SOUTH OF TUNGABHADRA (July to September 1769)

Now that the Marāṭhas had commenced the offensive, Haidar seems to have intended to continue the fight in order to regain the territories, namely, Sirā, Madgiri, Hoskote and Dodballāpur to the north and north-east of his state, which he had ceded to the Marāṭhas in 1767;[4] and also if possible the whole of the territory upto the river Tungabhadra,[5] the possession of which was so essential for the proper defence of the Mysore Kingdom. But, since the Peshwa who was hitherto engaged in his campaigns against Jānoji Bhonsle of Nagpur, had now returned to Poona, Haidar, fearing an immediate invasion of the Marāṭhas either from Poona or Miraj, postponed the re-conquest of the territory in the possession of the Marāṭhas to a future date;[6] until which time, he resolved to engage himself in acquiring the resources for meeting a powerful Marāṭha invasion which was certain to be undertaken soon after the rains for the usual levy of the *chauth.*

In the month of July 1769, Haidar sent a detachment of troops under his brother-in-law, Mukhdum Ali Khan, to Bednur to look after the defences of his territory in the north-west as a precautionary measure against any sudden incursions of the Marāṭhas or of the chiefs on the north-west, while he was engaged in reducing the territory on the north-east.[7]

After defeating Mahimāji Shinde, Mir Reza attacked Talpul which was defended by Rukmāji Raje Bhonsle for nearly a month. Haidar who was now at Punganur, marched to a place six miles from Talpul in order to join Mir Reza. The two now directed severe fire against the fort; but Rukmāji Raje did not submit. At last Srinivāsa Rao Bārki promising safe conduct, took him over

4 *Khare.* Vol. III. Letters No. 803 and 804.

5. *S. P. D.* Vol. XXXVII. No. 172,

6. *Khare.* Vol. III. No. 808.

7. *Ibid.* No. 809.

to Haidar, who however, imprisoned him and his followers. Talpul was garrisoned.

Thereafter, Haidar and Mir Reza proceeded northwards to attack Cuddapah. This place along with Kurnool had been transferred by the Nizam to Haidar as nominal dependencies in the previous year, according to their agreement for the joint invasion against the English and Mohammed Ali of Arcot. Haidar now wanted to exercise his right of collecting contributions from these two places. The Pathān chief of Cuddapah submitted to Haidar in July 1769, agreeing to pay rupees three lakhs, of which two lakhs were paid in cash and security provided for another lakh. Haidar next moved north to a considerable distance upto the Tungabhadra for the attack of Kurnool, on the pretext that the two lakhs of rupees taken by the chief of that place in the previous year for the work of mediation between Haidar and the Nizam ought to have been returned, since the Nizam had not fulfilled the terms of the treaty. The chief of Kurnool, on the advice of a *fakir*, is said to have made peace with Haidar by making the required payment in the month of August.[8] Similarly, contributions were obtained from Gudwall and Coticunda (identified with Koilkunta in the Kurnool District). Another place, namely Cuppethal (Kappahalla in Pattikonda Taluk of the Kurnool District) was taken and transferred to Basālat Jung of Adoni for one lakh of rupees.[9]

### Haidar attacks Murarrao Ghorpade of Gooty (September and October)

The territory of Murārrao Ghorpade of Gooty was next attacked. Murārrao had actively participated during the Anglo-Mysore wars against Haidar, despite Haidar's promise of friendliness towards him under the treaty of 1767. It was now Haidar's turn to punish Murārrao. The whole of his territory was overrun by Haidar, except the capital, Gooty, which being usually well provisioned would require a long siege for being captured.[10]. But Haidar could not engage himself in a prolonged siege of this

8. *Khare*. III. No. 809.
9. *Ibid*. No. 819.
10. *Ibid*. No. 815.

strong hill-fort, as the Marāṭha expedition was expected shortly. He, therefore, expressed his willingness to make peace if that could be done by a personal interview with Murārrao. The latter too, being in difficult circumstances at his hill-fort agreed to the proposal, despite the counsels of the Peshwa and Gopālrao to the contrary. The meeting took place in October.[11] Ḥaidar, whatever his future intentions were, showed great friendship by honouring Murārrao with presents of a purse of Rs. 25,000, three elephants, head-ware, a pearl necklace and other valuable clothes. The annual contribution from Murārrao was fixed at the modest sum of Rs. 50,000.[12]

The meeting between these two caused considerable apprehension in the courts at Poona and Miraj. Murārrao being the immediate neighbour of Haidar on the north, the continuance of rivalry between the two was considered necessary by all, not only for maintaining Marāṭha power in the Karnātak, but for preventing Haidar's progress towards the north. The possibility of an alliance between Haidar, Murārrao of Gooty and Basālat Jung was considered to be a source of danger to the Marāṭha possessions in the Karnātak. Therefore, when it was known that Murārrao would go to meet Haidar, the Peshwa himself, though he was not on very good terms with Murārrao, wrote kind letters to the latter assuring him of help from Poona and Miraj against Haidar.[13] It was feared by all that if Murārrao should meet Haidar, the former would lose all sympathy that the Peshwa had towards him. Gopālrāo Patwardhan too, wrote to him advising him to retreat from Gooty and he tried all methods, secret and otherwise to prevent a meeting between the two; for he feared the imprisonment of Murārrao. When, however, he actually met Haidar during October and was honoured and reinstated, it caused great astonishment in all quarters. Haidar, of course, as became known later, had no real affection for Murārrao; for, the animosity between the two was too deep and determined to be easily

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11. *Khare*, III. Nos. 816, 817 and 818.
12. *Ibid.* IV. No. 827.
13. *Ibid.* III, Nos. 816 and 817.

reconciled by a personal interview; and being apprehensive of a major Marāṭha invasion, Haidar only postponed the execution of his intentions against the chief of Gooty.

### PREPARATIONS TO MEET THE MARATHAS

Haidar's campaigns during the whole of this period between the months of July and December 1769, seem to have been guided not so much by motives of conquest of territory as of obtaining contributions from as many chiefs as possible in order to prepare himself to make a supreme effort to drive off the Marāṭha invasion which was expected shortly.[14] This explains his unusual campaigns in the rainy season and his haste in obtaining the submission of the several chiefs on fairly moderate terms.

Even when he was still engaged in the territory around Kurnool and Gooty in August and September, he wrote letters to the chiefs in the west, like those of Citradurga and Savaṇur, demanding contributions.[15] In the month of August, while he was engaged in the east, he sent his brother-in-law and general Mukhdum Ali Khan, as stated above, to Bednur to strengthen that place and to look after the defences of his territory in the north-west.

### HAIDAR'S ENVOYS AT POONA AND NAGPUR

At the same time Haidar sent his envoys Appājirām and Reza Ali Khan to Poona for talks,[16] probably with the intention of delaying the Marāṭha invasion rather than of making a settlement. Appājirām formally agreed to pay forty lakhs of rupees as the amount of contribution for the three years from 1768 to 1770. But he was unable to confirm this by means of a treaty or by the offer of security. He was prepared to offer security for ten lakhs of rupees only; for the remaining thirty lakhs, he offered to keep

14. The account given by Dr. N. K. Sinha in his book *Haidar Ali* Pp. 158-9 regarding the activities of Haidar between July and December 1769 besides being brief and unprecise, also suffers from entire omission of many important facts which are related in this paper.

15. *Khare.* III. Nos. 805 and 809.

16. *Ibid.* III. No. 811 and IV. Nos. 828, 832 and 835; also *Haidarnāma* P. 75.

Reza Ali Khan as a hostage until the payment of sixteen lakhs was made; while, the rest of fourteen lakhs were to be paid the next year. The Peshwa rejected this proposal.[17]

While the above talks were going on, Haidar was trying his best to sow seeds of dissention among the Marāṭhas. He sent his envoy Shāmrao Gopāl in October to Jānoji Bhonsle at Nagpur, to negotiate an alliance against the Peshwa.[18] Similarly at Poona Raghunāthrao, the Peshwa's uncle was trying to set up the Nizam and Haidar against the Peshwa.[19] The Marāṭha court got scent of these attempts and they even suspected a powerful secret combination of all their enemies, namely, Haidar, the Nizam, the French, Basālat Jung and also Murārrao Ghorphade and Raghunathrao.[20] But the truth was, to the above, the Nizam was unlikely to join Haidar. Nor would Jānoji Bhonsle join this alliance, for he had just recently made peace with the Peshwa and he meant to remain faithful. He even made it known to Haidar to that effect.[21] Murārrao was also faithful to the Poona Court.[22] But, Raghunāthrao who was really conspiring was promptly checked by the Peshwa.[23] Thus there was no possibility of a combination of all the above powers. But Haidar had hopes of getting English help according to the recent treaty made with them.

### MARATHAS COMMIT A GREAT MISTAKE IN DELAYING ACTION

While Haidar was systematically attacking the allied and feudatory chiefs of the Marāṭhas in the whole of Karnātak and levying contributions from them all, the Marāṭhas did not make any attempt to check Haidar's activities by sending troops until Haidar had collected money from almost all the places he attacked. They thus allowed time to Haidar to strengthen his power: and when, after the rains, they invaded his territory, it cost them very dear and it took them nearly two and a half years to reduce his

17. *Khare*, IV. No. 829.
18. *S.P.D.* Vol. XX. Letters No. 287 and 288,
19. *Ibid.* No. 198.
20. *Ibid.* No. 287 ; also *Khare*. III. No. 816.
21. *S. P. D.* Vol. XX. No. 287.
22. *Khare*. IV. Nos. 827 and 852,
23. *S. P. D.* Vol. XX. No. 198.

power. The Marāṭhas cannot be considered to have under-estimated either the achievements or the power and potentialities of Haidar;[24] for, from the very beginning of Haidar's campaigns, regular reports were reaching the Marāṭhas detailing his activities and stressing the need for sending immediately a considerable force to check him.[25] But the Peshwa did not move from Poona until November. He had, however, sent orders to Gopālrao Patwardhan as early as the 31st of July 1769, to enter the tents and show that he was moving.[26] But circumstances prevented Gopālrao too, from moving until the Dasara—that is, October, though, the Peshwa was repeatedly urging in his letters to Gopālrao the need for making an early start. Anyway, considering the consequences, the delay in the movement of the Marāṭhas was a great mistake.

### HAIDAR DEALS WITH BELLARY AND OTHER PLACES (October and November 1769)

After the submission of Murārrao, Haidar proceeded to Bellāry, a dependency of Adoni, a *jāgir* of Basalat Jung, towards the end of October. The chief of Bellāry resisted stubbornly and inflicted very heavy losses on Haidar's army. 10,000 rounds of ammunition are said to have been used and Rs. 30,000 spent on bandage and other dressing materials alone.[27] Haidar failed to capture the place.[28] "This unexpected failure and the pressure

24. *Khare.* III. No. 804.

25. *Ibid.* Nos. 803 and 815.

26. *Ibid.* III. No. 806.

27. *Ibid.* III, No. 810. Another letter No. 823 mentions the stiff resistance offered by the chief of Bellary. This letter seems to be wrongly dated by the Editor as *Bhadrapad vadya* (i. e. about September) instead of *Aswin* (October).

28. *Pexito.* (Memoirs of Hyder Ally P. 121. The page references regarding Pexito's work refer to the page numbers of the English Mss. as given in the manuscript of the Mysore Archæological Office), states that Haidar's force marched from Bellary on the 9th of November. But this cannot be true becasue the Marathi letters No. 832, 833 in *Khare. IV*, indicate that Haidar had crossed the Thungabhadra before the first week of November and was already engaged in collecting tributes from Harpanhally, Harihar, etc.

*Haidarnāma* (P. 81) mentions the interesting episode of Haidar being presented with *Kum Kum* by the widow of the chief of Bellary, (the chief having died in the meanwhile) while the former was retreating after raising the siege of that place. Haidar was enraged but could not do anything else just then.

of time, disposed him to compromise the reputation of his arms, by accepting the professions of dependency and the promise only of future contribution."

From Bellāry, Haidar moved to the south-west and early in November, he levied contributions from Harpanhally, Havaṇur and Harihar.[29] Lakshman Hari, the Marāṭha officer at Harihar was honoured by Haidar with the present of an elephant and a pearl necklace. Garrisons were left in some of these places which were subdued.

By this time, Gopālrao Patwardhan and Ānandarao Rāsthe who had started from Miraj in October, were already marching southward to prevent further aggressions of Haidar, and to infuse confidence into the minds of the chiefs to the north of Mysore territory. Haidar, therefore, strengthened the defences of his frontiers. He built batteries at Ānawatti (Sorab Taluk of Shimoga District),[30] where he had once encountered the Marāṭha forces during 1764 and which was on the route to Bednur. He hoped to make a stand there in case of further advance by the Marāṭhas. Then, leaving his rearguard at Kupelur[31] (Kuppatur in the same taluk ?), he marched towards Havaṇur on his way to Savaṇur.

## SAVANUR YIELDS TO HAIDAR (NOVEMBER)

From Harpanhally Haidar had written to the Nawab of Savaṇur asking him to send a representative for talks regarding the contribution due from him.[32] When the representative arrived he was told that the Nawab himself or the Dewan of Savaṇur should be sent for talks. From Kupelur once again, Haidar sent word to the Nawab to send his Dewan. In the meanwhile, Gopālrao Patwardhan and Ānandarao Rāsthe had marched through Bādāmi, and Yāvagal (near Nargund) to Handigal (in Gadag District) and from there wrote to the Nawab not to send his Dewan to Ḥaidar, nor to pay the contribution. They next marched to

29. *Khare.* IV. Nos. 834 and 835.
30. *Ibid.* Nos. 834 and 837
31. *Ibid.* Nos. 833 and 835
32. *Ibid.* Nos. IV 834

Mulgund ten *cos* from Savaṇur. The Nawab of Savaṇur was in a fix. Though the Marāṭhas were there to help him now, he did not dare to displease Haidar, who being his immediate neighbour could take his revenge after the withdrawal of the Marāṭhas. The Nawab, therefore, sent his Dewan Khanderao to Haidar, apparently, only to meet him for talks, but secretly to pay 40,000 *hons*. After receiving the amount, Haidar crossed the river Tungabhadra and withdrew southward to entrench himself in a proper place against the Marāṭhas who were to invade soon.

### MARATHAS ADVANCE (NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER)

Gopālrao had marched towards Savaṇur with the object of preventing Haidar from collecting tribute from Savaṇur by force. But when he heard that the Nawab had secretly remitted the sum to Haidar, he halted with his force for about a month at Sirhatti some distance fram Savaṇur.[33] Since he had no sufficient force with him, he could not march against Haidar without the arrival of the Peshwa's forces.

The Peshwa started with his force from Poona on the 11th of November 1769. He marched through Jejuri and Pandharpur and arrived at the Tungabhadra by the end of December. [34]

### HAIDAR GETS READY

In the meantime, Haidar obtained sufficient time to rest his army and to strengthen the defences of his frontier on the north-west. He expected the Peshwa to enter his territory from that direction, after being joined by Gopālrao. Therefore, during the later part of November and the whole of December Haidar was making preparations in the north-west in the present Sorab and Shikarpur Taluks. On the 24th of November, Haidar was at Hosur [35] (Shikarpur Taluk of Shimoga District), and on the 26th of December at Organium [36] (Udagaṇi in Shikarpur Taluk).

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33. *Khare.* IV. Nos, 834 and 847
34. *Ibid.* Nos. 836. 845 and 848.
35. *Ibid.* No. 842.
36. *Pexioto :* Memoirs of Hyder Ally, P. 122,

Finally he took up a position at Māsur Pass. It is worthy of note that this Pass was practically the only direct passage from the Savaṇur region towards Bednur. The whole of this area at present included in the Sorab and Shikarpur Taluks was at that time a thick forest, and is so to a large extent even now, being very near the Western Ghauts. Thus Haidar seems to have considered it best to make a stand in these forests, for, his army being superior in regard to the infantry, was bound to be of greater use in such a place against the Marāṭha army, which, consisting mostly of cavalry, would be at a disadvantage. Haidar seems to have planned also to win over all the Poligars in the surrounding areas, including the Poligar of Citradurga, against the Marāṭhas by offering, either to abstain from demanding tributes thereafter or to fix a reasonable annual sum.[37] But some of the generals of Haidar like Musayingal (?) a French General and Mir Faizulla seem to have tried to desert Haidar to join the Marāṭhas.[38] That explains Haidar's stern attitude towards the latter from that time.

## THE MARATHA PLAN OF CAMPAIGN

Gopālrao had realised that unless Haidar was completely subdued this time, he would grow very powerful later and it would become impossible to subdue him. Therefore, he was urging upon the Peshwa the need for making elaborate preparations to meet Haidar, by inviting the Nizam, Bhonsle of Nagpur and all the Poligars in the surrounding areas.[39] The Marāṭhas believed that the Nawab of Ārcot and the English of Madras would welcome a Marāṭha invasion of Mysore.[40] But while this was true in regard to Muhammed Ali of Arcot, the English had no intention of any alliance with the Marāṭhas against Haidar in contravention of their latest treaty with him.

The Peshwa after reaching the Tungabhadra, consulted Gopālrao regarding the plan of campaign. Both of them having

37. *Khare.* III. 805 and IV. 843.
38. *Ibid.* IV. 838.
39. *Ibid.* Nos. 843 and 844
40. *Ibid.* No. 844.

taken part in a number of campaigns against Haidar, particularly in 1764, knew the inferiority of their infantry as compared with that of Haidar which was trained in the European fashion and therefore was better disciplined; and they were also aware of the limitations of their cavalry in a forest area. They, therefore, resolved not to involve themselves in a long and indecisive campaign in the Ānawatti region, where Haidar had deliberately taken his stand—expecting that they would attack him there on their way to Bednur. He had, however, made proper arrangements for the defence of Srīrangapatna and Bangalore and he had no fear of their early fall to the enemy, should they evade him and enter his dominions by the plains in the east. On the other hand, the experience of the Marāṭhas in the campaigns of 1764 was enough to dissuade them from attacking Haidar in the jungle region of Ānawatti. They now decided that they should draw Haidar to the plains and then engage him. The only way of doing this was, for a part of the Marāṭha force to enter Mysore by the plains in the east, occupy all the territory in that direction and threaten Bangalore or Srīrangapatna, in which case Haidar would be compelled to leave his entrenched position in the woods and march to the relief of the other places. The Peshwa undertook to lead the major part of the army into Mysore by the plains in the east; while Gopālrao Patwardhan and Rāsthe with 15,000 troops were to keep themselves always at a distance of twenty *cos* from Haidar's camp and to follow and engage him as soon as he entered the plains, should he try to march towards the south-east.[41]

## STRENGTH OF THE TWO SIDES

The total number of troops employed by the Peshwa during this war was 77,500 men[42] of which about 22,000 were employed in maintaining the long line of communications between the Peshwa's army and his home country and also as garrisons in places taken from time to time. The Peshwa personally commanded a force of 40,000 which included 15,000 private troops of

41. S. P. D. Vol. XXXVII. Nos. 182, 184 and 185.
42. *Khare.* III, Introduction Pp. 1382-3.

the Peshwa, and the rest belonging to Bhonsle of Nagpur, Gayakwad and other *saranjāmdārs.* The Marāṭha army being composed largely of the mercenary troops of the feudal vassals, suffered as usual from all the defects peculiar to such a force. Gopālrao who was appointed to keep watch over Haidar had a force of 15,000.[43]

Haidar is also said to have employed about 75,000 men in all, of which 15,000 to 20,000 were stationed in different places; about 25,000 were in the charge of his generals like Mir Reza, Mukhdum Ali and his son Tippu; and the rest employed by Haidar himself.[44]

### HAIDAR AT UDAGANI (JANUARY 1770)

Haidar, who found that his strategy had been foiled by the Peshwa who adopted a different plan of campaign than that expected by himself, gave up his position at the Pass of Māsur; for, the Marāṭhas were not likely to come that way; and he now retired towards Udagaṇi (in Shikarpur Taluk of Shimoga District) early in January 1770.[45] "On the 4th of January 1770 the batterys, trenches and all the necessary fortifications in which the army was to remain, were begun, besides the impenetrable woods which were round about." [46] Haidar seems to have stayed there for a considerable period. According to Wilks,[47] "The military talents of Madoo Row were certainly of a high order; and Hyder did homage to those talents, in retiring as he advanced along the skirts of the woods to the protection of his capital in January 1770." Further he states that Mir Reza and Tippu were stationed in the skirts of Bednur to intercept the supplies of the enemy. But both these statements are incorrect, for, as given in all other accounts including the Marāṭhi letters and Pexioto,

43. *Pexioto* (P. 129) also states that Gopālrao had 15,000 men with him. But the total Maratha force according to him (P. 131) is said to have been 1,50,000 cavalry, 80,000 pindarees, 45 heavy cannon besides artillery, 5,000 rocket-boys and 230 elephants. But this number is too huge to be believed.

44. *Khare.* III. Introduction P. 1383

45. *Ibid.* IV. Nos. 853 and 854

46. *Pexioto.* P. 122

47. Wilks: Historical sketches of the South of India—Mysore. Vol. I. P. 685.

Haidar himself was in the woods of Shikarpur Taluk, particularly at Udagaṇi for a considerable period, even after the advance of the Peshwa through the plains in the east. Haidar had not much to fear from the Marāṭhas so long as he was in the forest regions. But he dared not meet so huge a force which was strong in cavalry on the plains. Haidar went to his capital not in January as Wilks states but at the end of March as will be shown below. Gopālrao was now camping at Savaṇur and was closely watching the movements of Haidar.

## ATTITUDE OF THE ENGLISH

At an early period of this contest with the Marāṭhas, Haidar demanded assistance from the English in conformity with the second article of the treaty he had made with them in April 1769. But the English, who had allowed the inclusion of that article in the treaty, had never the intention of allying themselves with Haidar against the Marāṭhas. Therefore upto the very end they evaded sending any help to Haidar.[48]

(*To be continued*)

48. *Ibid.* Vol. I. P. 769.

# TURTLE LORE

By Dr. S. T. Moses, M.A., D.Sc., F.Z.S., F.R.A.I.

## Definitions

The ancient group of animals known to science as "*Chelonians*" has always had a fascination, not only because of the curious characteristics and interesting habits of these reptiles but more so as they figure frequently in folk-lore, beliefs and rituals. Though all '*Chelonians*' are popularly known as 'tortoises' the name is correctly applied to those living on land while those from the sea are 'turtles' and those in the fresh waters are 'terrapins' or 'mud-turtles'.

## Egglaying of Turtles

The turtles come ashore for laying their countless eggs, to deserted or unfrequented beaches which are visited at nights—usually moonlit—for this purpose. The eggs are laid in pits scooped in the sand above high water-mark and later covered to screen them from prying eyes. The eggs which are soft-shelled—hence are proverbial for being soft—and vary in size from ping-pong balls to tennis balls, are hatched by the Sun. As soon as they are hatched, out of the eggs the baby turtles start 'to make tracks' for the nearest water and though there is not far to go, the percentage to reach the sea safely is low, as they are attacked by persistent enemies like birds and jackals. The number of eggs laid is never less than one hundred and often much more and there are two or three batches in each season and a Malay proverb says :" the turtle lays a thousand eggs and no one knows ; a hen lays one and tells all the world."

## Biomythic Significance of the Turtle

The reproductive habit of the turtle and the fact that creatures of the sea do not come out of it to walk on land, have apparently contributed to the propensity among the ancient philosophers of different religions and climes to invest this animal with a Bio-mythic significance. In modern times it is interesting to observe that a renowned Hindu Astro-Physicist working in a famous astronomical observatory in America has propounded a theory of

the evolution of the cosmos where he compares the origin of life to the principle of the tortoise egg awakened by cosmic rays.

### Tortoise and cosmogony of the Hindus

It is indeed curious that in the cosmogony of various nations the tortoise should find a place. As in the Pythagorean cosmogony, the Hindus believe the earth is supported by an elephant the '*Mahā Padma*' which in turn stands on the back of the tortoise '*Chukwa*.' To the Hindus '*Kurma*' is also the creator of the universe. The earth was lifted out of the waters by the tortoise and, in order that it should not roll up under the scorching rays of the Sun, eight enormous elephants were placed at the eight corners to keep it ever flat.

### Tortoise and Sathapatha Brahmana

The S'atapatha Brāhmaṇa says: "The creator is called '*Kurma*' a tortoise, because having assumed this form Prajapati brought forth all creatures. What he brought forth he made and because he made he is called '*Kurma*.' The Kurma is also called 'Kaśyapa,' hence all the creatures are Kaśyapa the children of Kas'yapa. He who is *Kurma* is 'Āditya,' the Sun."

### Taittiriya Aranyaka

The Taittirīya Āraṇyaka gives the story of the creation as follows:—The waters were '*s'ailām*'—chaotic. Prajapati alone came into being on a lotus leaf. Seized with a desire to create the universe he performed, *tapas*, penance. His '*rasa*' (juice) became a tortoise moving in the middle of the waters. When questioned if the creature did not come from his skin and flesh, the tortoise replied he had been there even from before. " In the Yajur Veda the tortoise is referred to as the Lord of the waters and in the Atharva Veda he assumes the name Kaśyapa synonymous with Prajapati, the creator and is then known as '*Swayambu*' or self-existent.

### Puranas

With changing ideologies the tortoise became an incarnation of Viṣṇu. He is said to have assumed the guise of the tortoise in the *Satya Yuga* or first age to recover some things of value

which were lost in the deluge. He placed himself at the bottom of the sea of milk and made his carapace the basis on which Gods and Demons dwelt. Using the serpent Vāsuki as rope, the ocean was churned by means of the mountain Mandhara. This Purāṇic legend of the churning of the sea for nectar where Viṣṇu assumes the tortoise incarnation is linked with that given in the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka which refers to Rudra as having drunk the poison and mentions the *Vatha Prasnas* (wind ropes) and *Oordhva Manthin* (the upright churn). The legend of Rudra and the poison is found in the Ṛgveda. The *Kurma* avatar legend is found in the Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābāratha, Viṣṇupurāṇa and Bhāgavathapurāṇa. The churning of the ocean by the Devas and the Asuras with the mountain Mandhara as the churn stick and the snake Vāsuki as the rope, the sinking down of the mountain into the depths and the incarnation of Viṣṇu as a turtle to keep it up in position during the churniug are the salient features of the story. The Rāmāyaṇa however makes no mention of the tortoise. Mahābāratha and Bhāgavathapurāṇa say that the poison was drunk by S'iva while the Viṣṇupurāṇa says the snake took the poison.

### The Esoteric and Evolutionary Interpretation of the Avataras

In the tenet of avataras the tortoise is placed second, the first being the fish and the third, the boar, and so on. An occultist who realises the existence of an esoteric side to these purāṇic stories finds the *Das'āvatāras* are only the land-marks in the onward march of evolution both psysical and spiritual. The divine turtle, the stage next in evolution to the fish shows the progress from the aquatic life of '*Bhakthi*' to the amphibious one of '*Bhakṭhi* and *Jñāna*.'

### Gond Belief about Genesis

In the Gond belief about 'Genesis' the tortoise figures. The account is as follows: " At first all was water and God sat on a lotus leaf in the middle of it. One day God bathed himself and out of the dirt from his body made a crow and sent it out to search for something dry. The crow searched for six months but found no resting place until he came upon the great tortoise '*Chakramal Chatri*' who was standing with one foot at the bottom of the sea and his head reaching the clouds. The crow settled on his head and told him all his troubles. So *Chakramal Chatri* sank deep down

into the sea and found Nalrāj and Nalrāṇi sitting at the bottom of the sea having swallowed the earth. He caught them by the neck and made them give him a tiny grain and this he sent to God. Out of this grain God made the earth with the help of '*Pawan Dasari*' the spirit of the winds, and in this earth Devatas were born. Afte them the trees of the forest came into being and then the cow-mother and at last man."

## Cheros Idea of Creation

Among the Cheros, a Dravidian tribe in the United Provinces, the idea of creation wherein also the tortoise figures is as follows: "In the beginning there was all water with a lotus flower blooming over it. One day *Bagvan* (God) who was then living in the *Pātāḷaloka* (Nether world) came up to the surface on the back of the tortoise. He then commanded the tortoise to bring some clay from the nether lands, while he was resting on the lotus flower itself. The tortoise piled up a heap of clay on its back and started but by the time he came to the surface all the clay was washed by the water in the course of his journey leaving nothing to offer to God. The rat was then given the same commission but it also failed. Then *Garud*, the eagle succeeded and gave the clay to God who pressed it with his hands and threw a bit in each of the four directions and forthwith there arose on the surface of the water a four-sided land mass and thus was formed the earth, of course."

## American Indian Beliefs

Among the American Indians the tortoise is mentioned in their egends on the origin of the earth. In the Iroquis scheme of life the world was in the beginning covered with a large expanse of water and when '*Aatentsic*' fell from heaven the animals held a conference to decide how she was to be received. The turtle was selected from among the creatures of the sea to catch her on its broad back and with the aid of mud carried by the waterfowl the earth was formed.

## Huge Sizes and longevity of these creatures are apparently the causes of these beliefs

The huge size to which some of the tortoises grow—in fact the shell of one extinct species from the Sewalik Hills is large enough to support an elephant—is apparently responsible for these

beliefs. At Pau in the Pyrenees the tortoise shell which cradled Henry of Navarre is said to be preserved. *Chitra indica* is the largest of Indian fresh water tortoises and among the marine turtles is the Luth or the Leathery Turtle (*Dermocheles coriacea*) called in Tamil, the seven striped tortoise, because of the seven ridges on the back and in Telugu the '*thone tabelu*' from the fact that the hard bony casing seen in other kinds is replaced by a thick leathery skin. The large land tortoises from Rodrigues, Galapagos and Seychelles islands are veritable giants and they are almost extinct in their original homes and linger as introduced pets in zoos in many countries. The extraordinary longevity of tortoises is another reason. Tortoises are the '*Methuselahs*' of living animals today. Patriarchs among these are the giants known as Galapagos tortoises and in fact one of them is said to be the world's oldest animal inhabitant today, his age being reckoned to be over five hundred years. The giant tortoise which relieved Nepoleon's exile at St. Helena died recently. Another petted by Captain Cook, the explorer who died nearly two hundred years ago is said to be alive and flourishing on the island of Tongo where it enjoys the native rank of a 'Chief.' A shell in Lambeth Palace is of a tortoise which perished in 1753, because of the accidental neglect by the Archbishop's gardener 120 years after its arrival in the Episcopal gardens as a present to His Grace There is a record of a giant tortoise imported from Seychelles to Mauritius in 1766 by Chevalier Marion de Fresne and in 1810 when the island was ceded to Britain Marion's tortoise figured in the terms of the treaty. For many years it was a pet in the barracks at Port Louis where it was twice shot at by a soldier. Early this century it lost its eye-sight and fell down a well. The body was recovered and stuffed and presented to the Governor of the island who gave it to the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, London. Some tortoises in the London Zoo are said to have been born in Cromwell's time and to have slept through half a dozen wars.

**Liberation of turtles caught**

Turtles are netted but more often caught when the females come ashore for discharging their parental duties. Unless the

fishermen go out specially with nets for turtle hunt as do the Kadayans and Valayans of Pamban and surrounding islands, the reptiles caught in fishing nets accidentally, are generally released, though there are some men who for filthy lucre forget that turtle is an incarnation of their deity and sell them for a few rupees. Orthodox Hindus offer garlands and worship the animal landed ashore and set it free. In Goa and the surrounding coastal villages it is a common occurrence for fishermen to bring turtles ashore and for the Hindus of the village to raise a subscription of ten to fifteen Rupees for paying the fishermen and finally the turtle would be taken in procession and put back in to the sea. In Japan a turtle which was not happy in the Sakai Aquarium was set free by the keeper in 1932. The children of Japan have a fairy tale in which there is a palace under the sea owned by the Dragon King and this turtle a 750 lbs monster was taken in procession with an escort of children to the brink of the sea to find His Submarine Majesty and regain his happiness.

**Ease in capturing Hawksbill turtles when feeding on Physalia**

While turtles in water are somewhat difficult to net, it is said that the case of the Hawksbill turtle which provides the 'tortoise shell' of commerce is different. This turtle is fond of the Portuguese man-of war (*Physalia*) which it devours shutting the eyes to avoid the stings of their tentacles which it brushes away with the flippers. When thus feeding the turtles are so preoccupied that they can be approached easily by boat and captured in nets or even by hand.

**Turtle catching on land by 'Turning it over'**

Turtle catching is however more on land and it is by 'Turning it over.' Man is said to have learnt this trick from 'Wild Dogs.' A turtle once when turned over on its back cannot regain the normal position because the carapace is broad and much depressed. This tactic is referred to in a Tamil proverb which says "He entered into argument with him and with his own words upset (caught) him as one would turn a turtle on its back."

**Turtle Deities at Srikurmam, Tellicherry and Nerenika**

Sree Kūrmam or Holy Tortoise in Āndhradeśa is named after the principal deity there, Sri Kūrmasvami, the tortoise incarnation of Viṣṇu. During the churning, many animals were killed and S'iva purified the worshippers from that sin. In this temple S'iva is represented as having Durga and Bhairavi on either side. The temple is said to have been built by Visvakarma, the celestial architect, and S'iva's linga is known as Sri Kūrmes'vara after Viṣṇu's incarnation. At Tellicherry in Malabar the lamp before Nārāyaṇa Guru's statue in the Thiya temple rests on an image of the tortoise. At Nerenika in Bellary where the hill with the temple, dedicated to Mallesvara contains many caves there is a large shapeless rock declared by some to represent a tortoise and by others a fish. This so-called tortoise image receives worship from devotees.

**Offerings of tortoise Images**

In Mullurkara shrine of Dakṣinamurthy in Cochin, which to the worshippers is more hope-giving than a hospital, the usual offerings to obtain a cure from disease or protection from a pest is to offer figures of the affected limb or of the pest. The presentation of a wooden tortoise is the sure and certain cure for stomach-ache.

**Rituals where tortoises, live and Images, figure**

Among Herzegovinians armlets favoured are tiny tortoises. The armlet worn during life is always buried with the wearer in order to ensure a safe passage across the Styx. In the Taittirīya Saṁhita is mentioned a ritual of burying a tortoise alive underneath the altar and it is said the tortoise thus buried will lead the sacrificer to heaven (*Svarga*). *Kachuga lineata* is known in Telugu as '*Dāsari tabelu*' because of the stripes on the nape which recall the marks of a religious mendicant. For devotional purposes, Brahmins especially the Nambuthris of Malabar use '*Kūrmāsana*', a small and low wooden plank in the form of a tortoise. These '*Ama Palagas*' are also used when taking meals etc. During marriage ceremonies these '*arumana palagas*' made of '*chammata*' and of the usual tortoise shape—the tortoise in the West is an emblem of chastity—are used for seating the bride and

bridegroom especially among Nambuthris. For the performance of *yajñas e.g.* at Kurundwar near Poona the *yajña Kunda* prepared should be in the form of a tortoise. A silver tortoise figured in a ceremony recently (February 1948) performed by His Highness the Mahārāja Jam Saheb of Nawanagar. It was the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of a memorial statue to Mahatma Gandhi at Chandivli, a suburb of Bombay. The Jam Saheb after repeating of Sanskrit mantras recited by priests placed on the ground a silver tortoise on which was engraved an account of the martyrdom of the Mahatma and the date of the laying of the foundation stone. On the tortoise was placed a copper plate and on it a concrete pipe for people to drop in pieces of precious metal. Around the pipe bricks were laid and cemented with a silver trowel.

**Tortoise feeding at Siddhanath, Agra, Puri etc.**

Observers often while complimenting our country (India) on her charity regret that much of it is misdirected; in a list given of the men and animals who get their due or rather undue share of such charity the tortoise finds a place. In the Surat and Ahmedabad 'hospitals' maintained from time immemorial for animals, tortoises have lived for many years though no records exist to show when they began their invalid lives. Feeding the sacred tortoises living in pools and other water-courses attached to temples is a certain way of acquiring merit. From early days Siddhanath has been a sanctuary for not only fish but also turtles. At Agra devotees or even others feed with balls or flour, baked gram etc. the innumerable tortoises living in the Jumna which fully seem to appreciate the attention given. Some even leave the water and enter the sand for receiving the doles. In ponds attached to Pagodas in Burma mudturtles are found and these are accustomed to feed on curry and rice thrown in by pilgrims and others who flock the Pagodas. Sweet-meat made of parched rice and palm-sugar is given as offerings to the mudturtles living in the tank attached to the famous temple at Puri. According to tradition current there, these tortoises are the descendants of an unhappy man by name Gopal who had somehow offended Jaganathasvami. The priests who attend to the wants of these creatures and at whose call the turtles come up to the surface are all named Gopalans.

### Mudturtles and Pisciculture

In Japan mudturtles live together with fish like Carps and Eels in fish ponds where the fish stir up the mud which the turtles love. But in this country the mudturtles which abound in all rivers and other fresh waters seem to be among the enemies of the pisciculturist. They cannot however be caught nor destroyed due to local religious sentiment. In some places the mudturtles living near banks used as burning ghats have developed a taste for human flesh.

### Mudturtles and Public Health

Tortoises in lakes etc. are a menace to public health by their polluting the waters, as has been noticed in Ceylon and India. While *Nicoria trijuga*, well-known for its disagreeable habit of defecating when alarmed, justifies the Tamil saying 'The dumb man spoils the village and the tortoise the well' *Lissemys granosa* the 'Milk tortoise' of the Tamils is a favourite in wells, its presence therein being said to clarify the water. The tortoise in the well is often compared to pretenders to knowledge.

### Turtle eating

Though many castes are patrons of tortoise consumption, fishermen do not generally land them as has been mentioned already except in rare cases when money and toddy make the sea-fishermen forget for the time being the turtle's connection with Viṣṇu and supply specimens to institutions like Aquaria or for aldermanic banquets at Government Houses. Among our turtles (the sea-turtles), the one most in demand for edible purposes is the green turtle whose succulent flesh immensely tastier than veal will set by its very sight an alderman mad with delight. A spicy Indian curry known as *Shakuti* is prepared from young turtles. The flesh of the turtle is however said to be occasionally poisonous; a turtle meal once wiped out a whole family of Valayas in Krusadai island. The Valayans are a long-lived tribe and patriarchs attribute their longevity to turtle flesh and toddy. In 1930 seven deaths were reported in a family in Jaffna—the fatal effects of turtle curry. The sad case of Lord Pigot, a Governor of Madras was different, the cause of death being 'eating remarkably heartily of turtle at Monckton's, the Sunday before his illness.

While the 'tortoise shell' turtle is inedible, the 'Loggerhead turtle' called in Tamil '*Panguni*' from the month of its abundance, is also eaten though not much relished. The Chinese recommend turtle flesh in the treatment of Leprosy. A mixture of the flesh of turtles with the skin of serpents is considered specially efficacious. In the Maldives and Laccadives the inhabitants who are Muslims do not eat turtles which abound in the seas round about because of a service rendered by a turtle to the mythological creator of these islands. The islands are said to have been hauled up from the bottom of the sea by means of fish-hooks by Komburāṇi and according to their legends it was a turtle which suckled (!) Komburāṇi and brought him up. Tortoises both freshwater and land, are eaten usually by the lower castes, e.g. Santals, Jungle Kanikkars, Ulladans, Nayadis, etc. In fact Indian shikaris think if they eat land tortoises they will grow stronger and develop more courage. In the forests of Orissa, Hos, Khols and Bhimrajis eat mudturtles living in the Brahmini and other rivers. Fatal cases as a sequel to a tortoise meal have been recorded time and again, e.g. in 1936 three people died at Tirur after eating a tortoise brought by the head of the family from the neighbouring forest. Tortoises are much relished by birds, jackals, etc. Birds take the tortoise high in the air and dropping it on a rock or stone break the shell—such an act cost Aeschylus' life as the eagle dropped the tortoise on the poor poet's bald head.

### Turtle eggs a delicacy

Turtle eggs of all kinds are eaten and it is said that omelettes from turtle eggs could be made by themselves, no ghee or oil being required as in the case of other eggs like hen's. When turtles are killed for their soup, if they are found with eggs the eggs are served in the soup and considered most delicious. Salted turtle eggs are also considered a delicacy.

### Turtle oil and beliefs about uses

Oil from turtle eggs could be extracted easily. Turtle oil is obtained from the fat of the Loggerhead; it is melted and the oil is used for smearing country craft. The Luth also yields oil and in Travancore this oil is used to supplement the supplies of marine animal oils in demand. Turtle oil is ordinarily used in the

composition of a cement or pitch for painting the seams of vessels. It is also used for illumination and lubrication. Turtle oil, if refined, could be used in curry and after refinement and medication is a reputed aid to beauty. Turtle oil is popularly recommended as a medicinal oil useful in cases of scrofula and anæmia.

### Beliefs about tortoises and House-building

Among Nairs, for house-building a site which is shaped like the back of a tortoise is always avoided. According to the '*Śilpa S'āstra*' or the '*Manai Adi śāstra*' consulted by most castes in India, if the owner in company with the engineer and architect or alone goes to see the land on which the house is to be built sees a tortoise, sure and certain it will be destroyed by fire. In the Tamil districts also, the tortoise is considered an inauspicious creature and should never be seen inside a house. The saying is "Destruction awaits the house entered by a tortoise or by a Court Amin."

### Tortoises and Totems

Dr. S. C. Roy speaking on totem worship among Oraons a showed that Kachappa the tortoise must have given rise to the gotra now known as Kasyapa and the existence of a wooden figure of the tortoise supports his theory. In South India among the Adidravidas, Katchan is a common name. It means tortoise catcher or tortoise eater and is seen in the name of the deity Kachaleesvaran. The Patnavars the great fishing community of the Coromandel Coast have the tortoise flag as also the weavers the Shedans.

### Tortoise stories about Perseverance friendship, evils of talkativeness, etc.

Tortoise is a type of plodding perseverance—its name Kūrmam means slow in motion or one who possesses little speed—as is seen from the Aesop's fables where it being slow but sure and steady won the race against the over-confident hare which went to have a nap on the way. In the Panchatantra, the Indian collection of animal stories, two ducks help to transport a tortoise by making it cling to a stick with its bill while they carried it by holding the

ends with theirs. Seeing this curious spectacle people in places over which the tortoise was carried in this fashion, assembled and stood gazing at it. The stupid tortoise failing to realise the necessity of clinging on to the stick for dear life opened its mouth to ask the ducks what the meaning of the action of the men was. It did so and fell on the ground where its body was shattered to pieces. Another story also found in the tales from, Jatakas the stories of Buddhist literature, is about 'friends in need' and shows how three animals a tortoise, a woodpecker, and a stag were friends and how when the stag was caught in the hunter's net the woodpecker by playing on the hunter's superstitions delayed his leaving the house for the netting ground, while the tortoise was busy gnawing at the net. Finally when the hunter reached the net he found to his dismay the stag bounding off and the tortoise slowly crawling away. So he caught the tortoise and put it in a bag which he hung to a branch of a tree. The stag enticed him away pretending to limp and led him a dance and finally leaving him in a thick forest came bounding to the tree and with the woodpecker tore the bag open and liberated the tortoise

**Tortoise in proverbs and riddles.**

The tortoise which can withdraw its head, limbs and tail within its double buckler formed by the carapace and the plastron is referred to often in Tamil literature as a good example of self-control. "If one could keep his five senses under control like a tortoise such discipline will safeguard him throughout his seven-fold births." Jackals are very fond of tortoises and one experiencing a windfall is compared in Malayalam to a Jackal getting a tortoise. Another interpretation of this proverb is that it refers to a useless thing. Those of this school of thought are apparently unaware of the obnoxious tactic the father of stratagems has recourse to, to draw the head of the reptile out. A Tamil riddle whose answer is tortoise runs as follows : Lives on land but also in water but is not a frog ; has encased skin but is not a crocodile ; is round in shape ; walking legs cannot be seen; face can be projected or drawn, in it is he who became the second avatar.

**A Layman's Bhagavad Gita. Part I.**—By A. S. P. Ayyar, M. A., I.C.S., Bar-at-Law. Published by The Alliance Company, Mylapore, Madras-4. Price Rs. 5-0-0.

THE volume before us is appropriately named. It bears all the characteristics of an attempt to the discourse of the Gīta by a lay-(worldly) man. The comprehensive introduction of 82 pages, the individual introduction to each chapter and the copious notes on each verse are marked by versatile scholarship and wide reading. But the content is of uneven value and quality. The tendency in some cases for phrasing to outrun the import militates against the sublimity of the main topic. However, there is much of value to the reader in Justice Ayyar's book. We give below a few nuggets from this mine: "With the infinite liberty of the sage who is for ever celebrated (of verse 28 Chapter V) there goes the limitless equality of V. 18, and the divine fraternity of VI. 30 and 32." "The Gīta has brought out the great truths of the Vedas, Upaniṣads and ancient Purāṇas, to the forefront, namely the Oneness of and supremacy of God (*Brahma*) the all-pervadingness of Righteousness (*Dharma*), the inevitability of action (*Karma*) the purifying effect of knowledge (*Jñāna*), the need for sacrifice (*Yajña*), the nobility of *lōkasaṁgraha*, the Bliss of true worship, the paths to God, the mystery of *avatars* (descents of God) and finally it has given five solemn promises, five immortal charters from God himself to all men. The first is that contained in IV. 7 and 8 (*avatars*, whenever necessary)...... The second is that no doer of good will ever tread the path of woe (VI. 40) ...... The third is that no devotee of His ever perishes (IX. 31).....The fourth is that He brings full security to and takes full care of the welfare of those who worship Him alone, thinking of no other (IX. 22)...... The last promise is that in XVIII. 66 where the Lord says, in effect: Leave every *Dharma* of yours, and seek refuge in Me. Whatever your sin, I shall release you from it. Do not grieve." "Its *svadharma* theory emphasises the fact, seldom realised by men, that each man has got from God some unique gift which none of his fellows has got, and which, if only we knew and cultivated, will make him fulfil himself best." His notes, on II. 29; II. 47; III. 19 and 20 regarding *lokasaṁgraha*, and IV. 1 and V. 15, 16

and 17 regarding *Jñāna* and *ajñāna* illustrate the author's versatility. His summary of the seven qualities of a perfect sage in useful. They are (1) Satisfaction in the Self, (2) Equanimity is, pleasure and pain, (3) Absence of attachment, attraction and aversion, (4) Complete withdrawal of senses from sense-objects, (5) One pointed devotion and concentration on God, and identification with Him, (6) Sense of true values, and rejection of the false values of the common man ; and (7) Renunciation of separate individuality and separate possession.

We shall fittingly conclude the review quoting the four steps culled out by him, for the sinner to become a saint and given in his introduction to Chapter IV. (Pages 134-135). "The first is when work is done without desire for fruit, and in a spirit of sacrifice to the Supreme, though there may still remain the feeling that he is the doer. The second is when the claim to be the doer is renounced, and *Prakriti* is recognised to be the doer. The third comes when the Supreme Self is seen as the Supreme *Puruṣa* governing *Prakriti*. The last and the final step is when he dwells in God and God alone, and sees every being's self in him and his Self in every being."

A. V. R.

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**Two Lectures on an Aesthetic of Literature**—By B. S. Mardhekar. Published by Karnataka Publishing House, Bombay 2. Price Re. 1-4-0.

THIS brochure contains two lectures on literary criticism delivered the Elphinstone College, Bombay. The first one 'Form in Literature' was delivered on the 20th November 1940. The lecturer enters the lists against the Aristotelian theory of '*lateral*' appreciation of literature and postulates his theory of '*vertical*' appreciation. He substitutes '*rhythm*' for '*form*' as the principle to judge whether a literary piece is a work of art. This principle of '*rhythm*' is elaborated in the second lecture delivered on the 27th January 1942. He says, "The Laws of Rhythm are three: the Law of Harmony, the Law of Contrast, and the Law of Balance: A work of literature weaves a pattern of emotional relations variously inter-related into a whole by the laws of rhythm. When their pattern achieves a rich complexity, they become abiding works of literature."

A. V. R.

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**For Seekers of God.**—By Svami Shivananda. Published by Svami Pavitrananda. Advaita Ashrama, Mayavathi, Almora, Himalayas. Price Rs. 2-8-0.

THIS volume of translation of conversations in Bengali of disciples and devotees with Svami Shivananda is set in a spiritual key. As the preface states "many of those who would go to the Swami were persons who sought to realise God in their lives, and the main trend of their conversations was in respect of that. Therefore, we thought it appropriate to name the book 'For Seekers of God.' The Svami was a direct disciple of S'rī Rāmakrishna and was second President (1922—1933) of S'rī Rāmakrishna Math and Mission. His words often remained "indelibly impressed upon the minds of the listeners and afterwards became the sheet-anchor of their spiritual lives." The attitude from his plane to the non-co-operation movement of 1922 and Mahatma Gandhi's plan of that day is given in the following answer to the question of a devotee: "Has not the mission some duty in this national struggle for freedom? Don't you feel for the country at all?" Svamiji's reply was "The Divine Incarnation, S'rī Rāmakrishna is the embodiment of perfect *sattva* ...... ..To spread his *sāttvika* spiritual thought, S'ri Rāmakrishna brought with him as his assistant, Svami Vivekanada. Svami Vivekanada could certainly have stirred the country to political revolution, had he so chosen...........But the master would not permit us to do so.........Our only desire is to advance the good of the world—the service of God in humanity."........."The renunciation, fortitude and material service of Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders, are indeed praise-worthy. Their lives are surely great and exemplary, working for what they sincerely believe to be beneficial to India. However, our plan of work is different. Every monk of this Math and Mission is dedicated to the ideal: For one's own salvation and for the good of the world." We constantly pray that people may develop spiritually and make headway towards God." We shall now give a few extracts illustrative of the valuable guidance enshrined in these conversations: "Meditation and *Japa* should be performed regularly with great devotion. They purify the Mind." "Prayer, earnest prayer is what is necessary. One should take the name of the Lord with

great earnestness. His name is the very essence. *Japa* is not bound by temporal consideration. You can repeat His name whenever you find time. It must be practised very secretly (to avoid ostentation).........with devotion. Then alone will one have peace and joy in one's heart. Forced practice will not do much good. It is all a relationship of love." "Wherever there is devotion know for certain that the grace of the Lord is there. External worship and things of that sort are just means to an end." "I have told you the way to reach the abode of peace; but you will have to do everything. From outside will come only suggestions; the rest has to be accomplished by one's own efforts. The power of the Guru is the suggestion. The more you advance towards Him, the clearer you will see the way."..." You are men of action. It won't do for you to look for auspicious days." The Master used to say "only those who believe in such things are affected by them; others are not. Besides you are devotees of the Mother. She is protecting you under all conditions and will always do so. If one takes the name of the Lord and starts on a journey, one will not come to grief." "It is very difficult to snap the bonds of *Māya*, without the grace of God; but it is also true that if a person sincerely prays to Him, He listens to that prayer and lifts the veil. His is especially gracious to you, house-holders, because He knows that you carry a heavy load on your shoulders. If you pray a little, He will be pleased and come to your rescue. But that prayer should be sincere and earnest. Do a little spiritual practice regularly every day, for ten minutes, for five minutes, or even only for two or three minutes. Practice must be regular and systematic; but whatever you do, do it with sincerity, from the heart. The mother dwells in every part and she does not take into consideration how much time you put into your practice but only how sincerely you do it. She only takes into account how much love and devotion you have for Her. God is very easily pleased with house-holders."

We shall close this review with two extracts relating to what the Guru takes over from his disciples and how he works them off: He initated a young woman who had led a sinful life but became penitent, after making her say this "Whatever sins I have committed in this life and in lives past, I offer them here (i.e. the Master)

and I will not sin any more," and remarked later that day, "Do you know why there is so much sickness in this (referring to his own) body—so much suffering? The sins of others are being worked out in this body; otherwise, why should it suffer so much." When asked what need have you to meditate so much? You can see the Master with your eyes open and talk to him; he replied "Yes, my child, you have rightly spoken. The Master, the Holy Mother, Svamiji and others are all very gracious. I do not have to meditate to see the Master. I do not meditate for that purpose, but for this: many have had initiation from me but not all can keep up their spiritual practice. There are still others who, although they keep up their practice, do not make much headway because of certain obstructions in their lives. For them, I have to pray separately. I have to remove the obstructions that stand in the way of their spiritual progress. Besides, in this world many have trials and tribulations. Therefore, our only prayer is that there may be peace in the entire world and a lessening of pain and sorrow and that men may advance towards God. We do not perform any spiritual practice for ourselves, my child."

A. V. R.

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**God and His Divine Incarnations.** By Svami Ramakrishnananda. Published by the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras 4. Golden Jubilee (1947) Memorial Edition. Price Rs. 2—4—0.

THIS invaluable, though small, book is an integrated compilation of the speeches and discourses of Svami Ramakrishnananda on the subject, and is a fitting memorial of the Golden Jubilee of the Math which he built and reared. A direct disciple of S'rī Rāmakrishna, he was, "a spiritual stalwart of profound realisation, and intrepid searcher and verifier of truth and a titan among honest intellectuals." His lectures held spell bound a generation among Madras University students and college alumni. The volume contains the quintessence of what modern Indian youth and intellectuals sorely need in matters religious and spiritual and we commend every Indian to read it over and over again to gain the faith, the spirit and the steadiness necessary at the present time.

Here are a few helpful extracts: "A man who realises God with love will have to be realising God throughout Eternity. No power can make him forget Him......That man can see that this whole universe is pulsating with life, because it is God's body." "Religion in India is altogether an individual thing...Every one is given the aspect of God fitted to his peculiar mood." "No man who has not true love towards God can be religious. Religion begins when attraction towards God is greater than attraction towards the world." "Attraction towards the world means egotism, attraction towards God means self-surrender." "If an ignorant man tries to drive an engine, you know how dangerous it is;" so say to God "I do not know how to run this engine, please God, do Thou do it for me." "Every man is a mirror in which we see his own actions reflected." "Churning the ocean (of milk) means churning life. Lazy people never achieve anything. But that man who is active knows how to churn life, and such a man turns out to be the greatest explorer, the greatest writer, the greatest scientist, or the greatest artist...Churning the ocean means, therefore, making our life perfectly active and fruitful........The churning consists in the steady performance of our various duties of life."

A. V. R.

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**Studies in the Ramayana.** By Saṁskrita Sāhitee Vallabha, Sārasvata Sārajna T. Sundarachariar, B.A., B.L. Published by P. Varadachary & Co., Linghi Chetty Street, Madras. Price Rs. 2-8-0.

THIS series of studies by Sri Saṁskrita Sāhitee Vallabha Sārasvata Sārajna T. Sundarachariar deals with the Bālakanda of S'rīmad Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa. As observed by Sir S. Varadachariar in his valuable foreword, a perusal of this booklet will help readers in the perception of "more beauty and more meaning in the great epic than they expected." As the author rightly observes, S'rīmad Rāmāyaṇa is a sovereign utterance of Indian Culture. "It is their daily and most popular scripture," and "has presented to the Hindu mind ideals of conduct and character which are the watch-words of Indian striving." "It is the shining strand of a common culture."

"It is the synthesis of all the S'āstras" and "a revelation of ultimate truth.".

It is a fallacy, much too current, that because the Hindu culture has assimilated and digested transcendentalism, it is 'unworldly' or 'other wordly' and our author betrays a leaning to this belief when he says "The Hindu has prized thought *above* action, self-effacement *above* self-assertion, giving above taking, silence above speech......such an outlook has been the primary cause of most of the calamities that have over-taken the Hindu in the course of history;" though he adds "It is the salt and savour which has preserved and sustained them. It seems to carry within it the seed of a life ever-lasting and invincible." That the eternal call to the Hindu is for a life of intense activity is evidenced alike in the S'rīmad Rāmāyaṇa and the sister epic, the Mahābhārata, particularly in the quintessence of the latter, S'rīmad Bhagavad Gīta. The difference between the Hindu and other ideals is not in the deflection from active life but in the view-point from which that life is to be lived and the motive actuating that life. The author has apparently missed this point.

The ideal life depicted in the S'rīmad Rāmāyaṇa is that of one in *sahaja* samādhi and this is also the life of activity advocated in S'rīmad Bhagavad Gīta, Chapter V. This is the *pravritti mārga* lived with "the knowledge of the *Ātman*", or "the vision of God" and one which forms a synthesis with '*nivritti mārga*' which is a course of discipline preliminary to such 'knowledge' or 'vision.' As the author rigtly observes, Vālmiki the *tapasvi* and disciple is "in anguish of spirit" and Nārada who incessantly delights in *tapas* and the contemplation of self and who is his *guru* appears in answer. But what does Vālmiki seek from him, "Not knowledge of *ātman* (self) but knowledge of a 'perfect man' and the answer is 'Rāma.'" The very question by Vālmiki depicts the life which a great *tapasvi* expects from one who has realised the self or has had vision of God. He enquires in effect how the three *puruṣārthas—dharma, artha* and *kāma*—are sublimated in one who has achieved *mokṣa.* That is also why the S'rīmad Rāmāyaṇa itself is described as *Dharma-kāma-artha-sahitam.*

The copious notes appended to the studies comprise a wide variety of topics and give valuable information. The booklet deserves wide circulation.

A. V. R.

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**Spiritual Flashes and Earthly Lights.**—Collection of some of the messages received at the centre by auto-writing, semi-trance and spiritual mediumship and articles from well-known spiritualists. Sixth Anniversary Number. Published by the Spiritual Healing Centre, Coimbatore. Price. Rs. 2-8-0.

THE Spiritual Healing Centre has collected in this Sixth Annual Number under review some of the messages said to have been received at the centre by auto-writing, semi-trance and spiritual mediums and articles from well-known spiritualists. It is dedicated to Silver Birch who started the centre and has always been consistently kind. Higher spiritualism is claimed to be another practical side of religion. The number of articles and illustrations make interesting reading. The Sun of the ancient Egyptian religion, the Crescent Moon of Islam, the Cross which is not merely the symbolism of sacrifice but also of the religion of Jesus, the Lotus which symbolises the teachings of Gautama the Buddha, the Swastika which represents the ancient Āryans who worshipped fire, the religion of *Kṛṣṇa* and *Siva* represented by the insignia of the *Trinity* and the *Tris'ulam* all represent in one banner the great truth of the unity of all religions. The contributors are persons who have devoted their life-time for the success of the endeavour for which they have been working. T. Anantachari, Ṛṣi Ram Ram, S. Tulasidas Naidu, Wendell L. Wilkie, Leadbeater, Nityānanda, Khan Bahadur Abdul Karim, K. S. Doraiswami, Dr. P. Govindarajulu, M. K. Spencer and V. D. Rishi are some amongst the many who have been experimenting in the spiritual realm and have been giving the world the results of their psychic experiences.

S. S.

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**Islam A Study in Unity.**—By Khan Bahadur Abdul Karim, B.A. Published by the Spiritual Healing Centre, Raja Street, Coimbatore. Price Re. 0-8-0.

ISLAM has properly been described by Abdul Karim as a study in Unity and his quotations from the Holy Quoran and various teachings of saints and mystics show that there is nothing in the tradition or history of Islam which is calculated to impede the progress towards unity. The Sai Baba movement is another contribution in this respect.

S. S.

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**A Holy Woman of India—Sarada Devi.**

**Memoirs of a Truth-Seeker.**—Both by Winifred Iles. Published by the Vedanta Movement, 24 North Side, Streatham Common, London. S.W. 16.

THE two booklets under review are posthumous publications of the authoress who left us in March 1942. The first work deals with the life of the Holy Mother—S'ārada Devi—a symbol of the ideals of womanhood which India has proudly adored for thousands of years. For decades the Mother had been the very centre of a great religious movement which has now extended beyond the shores of India. Whereas ordinarily woman is content to remain as a kind of cipher in the background of the great man's life, S'ārada Devi, the wife of S'rī Rāmakrishna Paramahaṁsa made out her services to him and her native spiritual gifts, a life which shines like a beacon in its own light and which has a perpetual inspiration to all the young men and women who until their last days of the Holy Mother came to her for counsel and guidance. To spiritual India such unsophiscated women with a profound spiritual insight and understanding have been the torch-bearers in every dark period. At this dreadful time when civilisation has assumed the form of a Frankenstein, S'ārada Devi's sublime teachings and quiet mode of living will remind us of a higher spiritual destiny.

Memoirs of a Truth-Seeker begin with the description of the misery of a compassionate mind, harassed by the storm and stress of the international situation. The memoir includes thoughtful

discussions on Vedantic ideals and depicts in a homely way the reactions of a modern mind to Yoga and Vedānta giving short accounts of the Vedānta work at several places in England. The authoress suggests a most desirable way for the assimilation of the cultures of the East and the West. She discovers that the spiritual unity of the East and the West was already existing in the lives and teachings of the Eastern and Western saints. Her reflections on æsthetics, ethics and religion make an interesting reading. In presenting her personal experience the authoress dwells on the Unity of Faiths and conceives a World Community on the basis of the oneness of life.

The two booklets are neat and handy. The Vedānta Movement deserve to be congratulated in bringing out these two works from the notes and published articles of the authoress.

H. R.

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**The Essence of Buddhism.** By Dr. Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, D.Litt. Published with permission by The Buddhist Society, 106, Great Russell Street, London, W. C. 1. Price 2 sh. 6 d.

DR. SUZUKI gives a translation from the Japanese of his Command Address to H. M. The Emperor of Japan on April 23rd and 24th, 1946, in this pamphlet of thirty pages. The fundamental purpose of Buddhism is to pass beyond the world of opposites, a world built up by intellectual distinction and emotional defilement and to realise a spiritual world of non-distinction, which involves achieving an absolute point of view. Buddhism is beyond the comprehension of the intellect. Discrimination and non-discrimination are two, yet one; otherwise there is no way in which to transcend the contradiction involved in the intellect. In one way the intellect is denied, yet without its help there is no way of transcending it and Buddhists claim that the paradox can only be solved by personal experience. There is no evasion of Karma for the enlightened or the unenlightened. The enlightened falls into cause-effect just as the unenlightened but his failing is merely the paying of an old debt. In Buddhism God is immanent in his beings. We echo the hope of Christmas Humpreys that our belief in such principles as these will alone provide a foundation for a less unhappy world.

H. R.

**A Catechism on Zoroastrianism.** Parts I and II. By S. H. Jhabvala. Published by the author at Khar, Bombay.

**The Prince of Light.** By S. H. Jhabvala. Published by the Karnataka Publishing House, Bombay 2.

THE first brochure on A Catechism on Zoroastrianism gives a short account of Zarathushtra—the Prophet of light, his religion, the fundamentals of Zoroastrianism and the duties cast upon each individual. "A Parsi needs to be a better Parsi first before he can vauntingly address himself as a worthy son of Mother India." The questions and answers in each chapter have to be read and pondered over to be properly appreciated.

The second book depicts the life and teachings of Zarathushtra in poetry. Zarathushtra is light which gives birth to life, and joy, because light is knowledge, light is science, light is wisdom. This little book reflects light and carries the message of his wisdom in the shaping of reconstruction of a new world that is being born.

S. S.

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**Prakrit Languages and their contribution to Indian Culture.** By S. M. Katre, M.A., Ph.D. Bharatiya Vidya Studies No. 3. Published by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay 7. Price Rs. 2-8-0.

THIS book is designed to serve as an introduction to the literary world of the linguistic heritage contained within the Prākṛt literature and to estimate the manifold contribution that Middle Indo-Āryans have made to Indian Culture in general, by giving a panoramic view of all branches of that literature. The word *ārya* was employed to denote cultivated man and Indo-Āryan was used to represent the language of the Vedic texts beginning with that of the Ṛgveda and classical Sanskrit as defined by Pāṇini, and Patañjali and as employed by Kāḷidāsa and others down to the present day; and in actual speech, by the dialects current among the Vedic Āryans up to the time of Pāṇini and current among the *s'istās* thereafter for a considerable period. The book not merely kindles an interest in this living past but flames it up in order to pursue the subject further to a point of specialisation. We have a duty not only to ourselves but to all future generations as yet

unborn, to preserve this ancient heritage and hand it over to them enriched by our lives and experiences, as a surer foundation for building up a future of humanity which rises above elemental forces.

S. S.

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**The Muria and Their Ghotul.** By Verrier Elwin. Published by The Oxford University Press, Bombay. Price Rs. 25-0-0.

VERRIER ELWIN who has devoted the best part of his life to the study of the aboriginal tribes and castes of Central India has published now another work about the Muria and Their Ghotul being the fruits of research into their habits and customs in the Bastar State. The Bastar ghotul is one of the most highly developed and carefully organised. For what is a village guardroom for the Naga, a boys' club among the Uraon, a refuge for temporary sexual association in Indonesia, is for the Muria the centre of social and religious life. He has developed the cultural pattern in due order. The Muria ghotul is an institution tracing its origin to Ligo Pen, a famous cult-hero of the Gond. All the unmarried boys and girls of the tribe must be members of the ghotul. This membership is carefully organised. Boys and girls are initiated and given a special title which carries with it grade, rank and special duties. Leaders are appointed to organise and discipline the society. The boy leader is called the *Sirdar* and the girls' leader the *Belosa*. The boy members are known as *chelik* and the girl members as *motiari*. There are two distinct types of organisation. The older classical type of the ghotul where boys and girls pair off in a more or less permanent relationship which lasts till marriage. They are often married and co-habit in the dormitory for several years. And in the modern form of ghotul such exclusive associations are forbidden and partners must constantly be changed. The boys act as acolytes at festivals, and the girls as bridesmaids at weddings. Both dance before their clan-god and at the great fairs. They form a choir at the funerals of important people. Their games and dances enliven village life and redeem it from the crushing monotony that is the normal characteristic in other parts of India.

The work under review describes the geographical background of the tribe and gives a brief account of the three elements that compose it—the Jhoria, the Muria and the Kondagoan; gives the economic life of the Muria; the ghotul as the night club; all day its members are engrossed in the quest for food and drink. The *chelik* are kept busy in both axe and plough, cultivation, hunting, fishing, gathering honey, tapping the sago palm, collecting fuel. The *Motiari* not only work very hard at home, but go out for roots, wild fruits and myrobalans, to pick broad leaves for plates, cups and pipes, to fish and to express oil. The tribe is organised by clans and families controlling its relations with one another and directs its matrimonial alliances. The marriage ceremonies are described in detail. Their religion and mythology are derived from the legend of Lingo Pen. The dormitory is a shrine protected by supernatural forces and full of uncanny power intimately connected with the religious life of the tribe. The relations between the father and the son wherein the father wants to prevent the children from witnessing 'the primal scene,' building the ghotuls, the different types of ghotul organisations, ceremonies and initiation of leaders. A typical evening in the ghotul according to its jealously preserved procedure, their dress and fashions, dreams, games and dances, riddles and folk-tales are described vividly. An attempt has been made to a solution of the problem of infantile pre-martial promiscuity. If the ghotul could exist in another kind of society, a society less free from rivalry and competition, less subject to jealousy, less gentle and tolerant there would be no reason to lament a disintegrating tribal society, if the ghotul should dissappear. The Muria had begun the long descent to degradation and collapse that has affected many Indian tribes. At present Muria culture and society is complete, close-knit, organised, loyal to itself; the Muria has a full and happy life; and a great part of his unity and happiness depends on the ghotul.' Many who live all their lives among the Muria hardly realise that the sexual relation is secondary and the magical, religious and social aspects of ghotul life predominate the Muria's mind. If there is licence there to also taboo; if youth has

freedom it moves on into a life of strictest decorum. Muria life may be described as having in its pre-nuptial period many of the features of Huxley's *Brave New World*, but in it post-nuptial periods is the atmosphere of the poems of Tennyson. To write of the Ba-ila and omit all reference to sex would be like writing of the sky and leaving out the sun ; for sex is the most pervasive element of their life.

The anthropologist has to be both a detective and a magistrate ; he must be ready to follow the slighest clue, but he must test with the great care the evidence that is put before him : and the ethnographer should present his credentials in as precise a manner as possible and should confess his failures. The total number of ghotuls visited by the author comes to no fewer than 347. Verrier Elwin has in this work attemped to help the Muria to continue as they are today to be happy, free and innocent. The book is profusely illustrated. Prudence is necessary but not error and nursery prejudices should not cloud our reason. (Eric Gill, *Drawings from Life.* P. XV.) The Muria has a simple, innocent and natural attitude to sex and in the ghotul this is strengthened by the absence of any sense of guilt and the general freedom from external interference. The Muria believes that sexual congress is a good thing, doing good and is healthy and beautiful when performed by the right people such as a *chelik* and *motiari* who are not taboo to one another, at the right time, outside the menstrual period and avoiding forbidden days and in the right place, within the ghotul walls where no sin can be committed and that is the happiest and best thing in life. The very idea of platonic attachment is ridiculed. Celibacy is not admired and it is considered dangerous to be unmarried. The Hindu *sādhu* is rarely respected. The ghotul in Muria society is an institution that has manifold uses. It teaches social habits to the youths of both sexes. It trains them in post-martial behaviour and makes them useful members of the Society. It inculcates a feeling of tribal discipline, provides a focus for the sentiments of the people and prepares the younger generation to discharge those social and economic obligations without which collective life of any kind can neither grow nor thrive.

S. S.

**The Warlis.** By K. J. Save, M.A., LL.B. Published by the author. Special Officer for the Protection of Aboriginal and Hill Tribes, Thana. Sole Distributors, Padma Publications, Ltd. Bombay. Price Rs. 10-0-0.

THIS is an important addition to the scanty literature on a subject of Indian Aboriginal Tribes, especially of Western India. It shows how amongst the tribes of the Thana District of the Bombay Presidency about eighty-one per cent of them cannot balance their budget and even those who do so live in a miserable condition: they are the Warlis. The author has restricted the study of this tribe to the Thana District which is the stronghold of the tribe though they are found scattered in other parts of the province. The Warlis think they they are in an humble and humiliating position and that theirs is the lowest tribe and that after creating them the trouble of creation to God was over. The tribesmen do not claim any descent from any king but they believe that they are the descendants of a great *ṛṣi*. The tribe as a whole is a settled one, the wandering habits are almost extinct and they lead a quite agricultural life. The Warli family is patronymic. The father is the ruler of the family. Their ritual songs and mythology make interesting reading. The Warli culture is primarily simple, at times primitive and at times complicated like the culture of the Hindus. Many Hindu festivals are celebrated by them. They believe in Hindu gods though not worshipping them, often refers to these gods in their ritual songs, have borrowed some of the customs of the Hindu, worship *Sati*, the presiding deity of a child and offer *pindās* to the dead. Warlis take pride in calling themselves peasants.

The book is amply illustrated, contains a glossary of Warli to English words and a copious index. It is nicely got up. The author deserves to be congratulated for his close and patient study of the tribe.

S. S.

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**The Hill Tribes of Jeypore.** By Lakshmi Narayana Sahu, M.A. Servants of India Society, Cuttack.

IT is said at one stage of life when civilisation had not yet made

any progress the original people all over the world were almost on an equal level of life and thought. Given similar circumstances and equal opportunities the aboriginals will be able to climb the heights of civilisation and culture as any modern civilised man.

The Kammaras form the blacksmiths of the aboriginals who smelt iron directly from the ore and make agricultural implements as well as household utensils. There are about 4,63,516 people belonging to the aboriginals out of a population of about ten lakhs in the Koraput District of the Orissa Province belonging to different communities. The Kandhas do not drink milk suggesting their pre-Āryan culture, while men went out hunting women were gathering fruits and they made a home without fire. Spirits are appeased by sacrifice. It is to be hoped that it will not be long before these aboriginals are reclaimed and put in the way of advancement of culture and civilisation.

S. S.

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**Field Songs of Chattisgarh.** By S. C. Dude. Published by The Universal Publishers Ltd. Hazaratjung. Lucknow. Price Rs. 3-12-0.

THE work under review falls into three portions. The first one deals with "The United Provinces—A Cultural Mosaic" by D. N. Majumdar; the second "Field Songs of Chattisgarh" by S. C. Dube: and lastly "Some Folk-tales of Kolhan" by D. N. Majumdar. Majumdar begins his contribution on "The United Provinces—A Cultural Mosaic" with two incidents that occurred while he was in an aboriginal a village in Singbhum in Bihar and in a Gond village in the Bastar State, Central Provinces.

No civilisation has sprung up out of a vacuum and none can ignore the foundation which is deeply rooted in the cultural life of the people whatever levels of development in it the various social groups may represent. Each particular stage of culture is the product of an earlier one in which the germs of progress could survive and flourish to produce the tree and foliage that provide the canopy of peace. From the savage to the civilised there must be a continuity of cultures each of which must have

assimilated customs and practices from its predecessor or built on a foundation more primitive and original than itself.

Dube deals with Field Songs of Chattisgarh in the second section and gives them under several headings *viz.* General song, Dance song, Caste song, Songs for Special Occasions, Tribal songs and Legends. The General songs can be sung by all people at all occasions irrespective of their caste. The Dance songs are of three categories, *Karma*, *Nachori* and *Sau* which are sung only to the accompaniment of particular dances. The *Karma* dance accompanies songs determined by its rhythm and pauses; *Nacha* is a popular folk-dance and pleasant lyrics and the *Nachori* song always accompanies this dance. *Sau* dance of the Chattisgarhi women is the prime Diwali attraction in rural parts. Caste songs are exclusively the songs of the Rawats and the numerous legends and songs of the wandering Dewars. Songs for special occasions are those sung when occasions like the birth of a child, marriage, etc. call for. The tribal songs point to the importance which the folk-songs may have for anthropological field-workers. Legends are collections of the popular beliefs and folk-tales blended and the importance of the legends and ballad poetry of Chattisgarh has not been sufficiently recognised. The translation of the songs make interesting reading.

Majumdar in the last section gives some folk-tales of the Kolhans, inhabiting the Singhbhum in Bihar. The transliteration with the translation of the folk-tales add to our knowledge of the aboriginals.

S. S.

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## SANSKRIT

**Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra** with the Commentaries of Devasvāmin and Nārāyaṇa. Edited by Svami Ravi Tirtha. Vol. I. Adhyaya 1. Adyar Library Series No. 44. Published by the Adyar Library, Adyar. Madras. 20. Price Rs. 6-4-0.

THE volume before us gives in book form the commentaries previously published serially from 1937 to 1941 in the Adyar Library Bulletin. The Editor is a student of Sanskrit Literature in its religious and philosophical aspects. This is the first time the commentary of Devasvāmin is available in print. Nothing is known of Devasvāmin. But Nārāyaṇa refers to him as an earlier commentator.

In the suggestive introduction, the editor assesses the value of Gṛhya Sūtras and of the function they have in the preservation of Indian Culture, with which we agree. "It is not merely an academic interest. There is some practical interest also............ Indians have been able to evolve a social order which could withstand the ravages of time much more successfully than what has been evolved in any other ancient country......While the social order adapted itself to the changing conditions and consequently changing needs of man, yet there was a continuity and a stability so that the individuality of the social order was never destroyed. ...........It (thus) always remained modern throughout the varying periods and stages in the evolution of the Indian nation......... What there was was only stability; the social order was never static.........According to ancient Indian law-givers there was no conflict between reform and orthodoxy. Reforms warranted by the changing needs of the times are sanctioned by the law books of ancient India." The Taittirīya Upaniṣad says:

"अथ यदि ते कर्मविचिकित्सा वा वृत्ति विचिकित्सा वा स्यात् । ये तत्र ब्राह्मणाः संमर्शिना :
युक्ता आ युक्ताः । अलूक्षा धर्मकामाः स्युः । यथा ते तत्र वतरन् । तथा तत्र वर्तेथाः ॥"

The basis and content of Gṛhya Sūtra and similar texts is summarised appropriately thus: "There is an inherent tendency influencing man's life birth after birth. One's actions, tendencies and capacities are influenced by his past and they in turn influence the future. But man's life is never tied down by the

inherited tendency..............He has the full power to influence his future. This law of *karma* and of transmigration is not a philosophy of fatalism........ .....It is a philosophy of full freedom for the will of man, where even God does not interfere. Man can get guidance and aid from God." समोऽहं सर्व भूतेषु नमेद्वेष्यो स्ति न प्रियः || as the Gita says. "At every particular moment, man can shape his future according to his will......That is also the great part which astrology plays in man's life." What astrology says is "only what man's tendencies are and how he can and must steer his course to avoid unnecessary obstacles and to take advantage of favourable currents." Similarly, "a study of these ancient texts helps society in shaping its future.........Their real value is that they tell man about his general tendencies as conditioned by the past so that they can be a guide in (shaping) the future......They are sign-posts and not barricades on the way. It is wrong to ignore a sign-post ; it is equally wrong to stop (the journey) because there is a sign-post ......" Yudhiṣṭhira's reply to the Yakṣa holds good for all time "What the representative men of an age adopt is the right path." This is what the Taittirīya Upaniṣad also says.

The Theosophical Society and the Adyar Library are doing great service by publications of ancient texts in easily available form. We join the editor in his tribute to the Society. "At a time when Indians were being carried away from their national heritage by the attractions of modern life, the Theosophical Society (and may we add, the Sri Ramakrishna Mission) arrested this aimless drift and made a strong effort to turn the nation back to its ancient heritage of wisdom." And we pray with him that their labours "may bear fruit in creating a new nation on the Indian soil, steeped in its ancient wisdom, proud of its past and confident of its part in the future world."

A.V.R.

## ENGLISH-TAMIL

**Tolkāppiyam—Collatikāram.** With an English Commentary by Vidyāratna Dr. P. S. Subramanya Sastri. Published by the Annamalai University, Annamalainagar, P. O. Annamala University Tamil Series No. 9. Price Rs. 5-0-0 ; 7 Sh.

WE welcome this English translation and commentary on the second book of the earliest Tamil Grammar. Tolkāppiyam is the earliest extant work in Tamil. By its very nature, it bears evidence of a considerable development of Tamil language and literature prior to its composition. It bears other internal evidence also of the inter-action of other cultures with Tamil Culture and the presence of translations from other languages. As pointed out by the general Editor, T. P. Minakshi Sundaram, the author deserves to be congratulated on his masterly preface in which he has summarised his conclusions on Tolkāppiyam, though they are not in all cases beyond the scope of controversy. The late Somasundaram Pillai in the pages of Tamil Poḻil and V. Venkatarayalu Reddiyar in his book "Tolkāppiyam Eḷuttatikaram" and Somasundara Bharatiyar in his commentaries on some chapters of Tolkāppiyam have joined issue with the author in his emphasis on Sanskrit parallels and the extent of Sanskrit influence on old Tamil. "The inductive study of Tolkāppiyam has just begun and the author, as one of the pioneers, has played no mean part ; but it is too early to decide in favour of any one view."

The following observations of the author will, however, command universal approval : "There was a vast range of literature in Tamil before Tolkāppiyar's time and there were many grammarians before him who had coined many technical terms, Āryans and Dravidians had been living together long before his time........ The *Puṛanānūṛu*, the *Kallittokai*, the Paripāṭal, the Tirukkural are posterior to Tolkāppiyam......The Tolkāppiyam cannot be later than Second Century B. C."

A.V.R.

# QUERIES

THE Editor invites the readers of the **the Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society** to communicate their views on the points mentioned in the following extracts.

## BHAGIRATHA PARISHRAM

• For the past 20 years I am engaged in river research, training of river, studying of river behaviour in different reaches, especially in case of young, mature and old streams. During the course of my studies of the rivers of India I have been making enquiries to find out the enthatic source whether King Bhagīrath really brought Ganga Ji from Himālaya to the plains of India and to the Bay of Bengal. 'Bhagīrath Parishram' is known to every son of India, nay every body is proud of this achievement and is indebted to that Great Person who put life into an otherwise unproductive country. For instance take Ganga Ji out of India, what is the value of this country. In Bengal the very name of this river is after Bhagīrath. It is named Bhāgīrathī.

While I was in America in 1946 I was amazed by huge training works constructed by American Engineers on the Mississipi river. This visit further increased my curiosity for exploring the truth of 'Bhagīrath Parishram.' I spent some time in the library of the Central Board of Irrigation and was glad to read a reference in the Memoir of Geography and Geology of India written in the Eighteenth Century by the then Director General of the Survey of India. Besides giving a reference to 'Vāyu Purāṇa' it also mentioned the observations of an eminent geologist of those days. It reads "When I look at Ganges in the reach of a few miles below the source I wonder if this course has been made by the stream. This appears impossible. It seem to be made by man." I have consulted 'Vāyu Purāṇa' but have not been able to get much information. I shall be grateful if you will kindly let me have the literature available on this subject..............I fell Bhagīrath Parishram topped the list of such achievements.

H. L. UPPAL.

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T. S. MADHURANATHAN.

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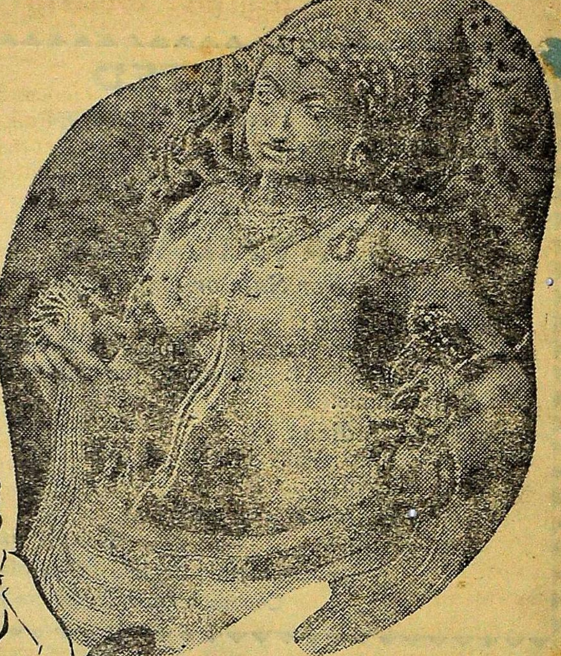

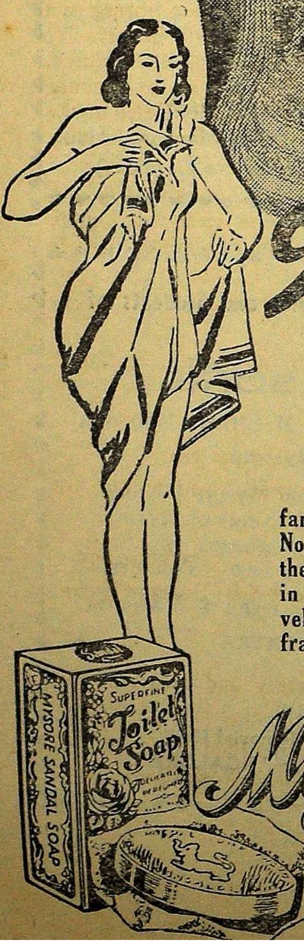


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